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MAKES THREE

BABYLON 5
Straczynski speaks

THE AVENGERS
Kinky goes-on

DEEP SPACE NINE
The new season

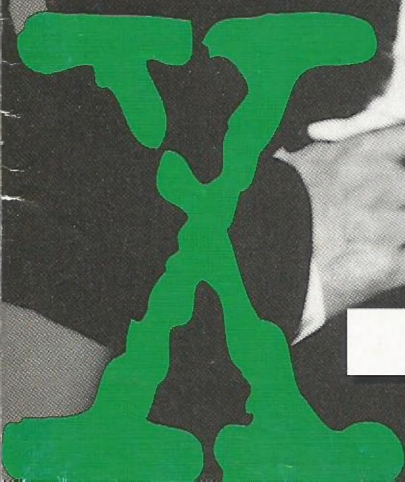
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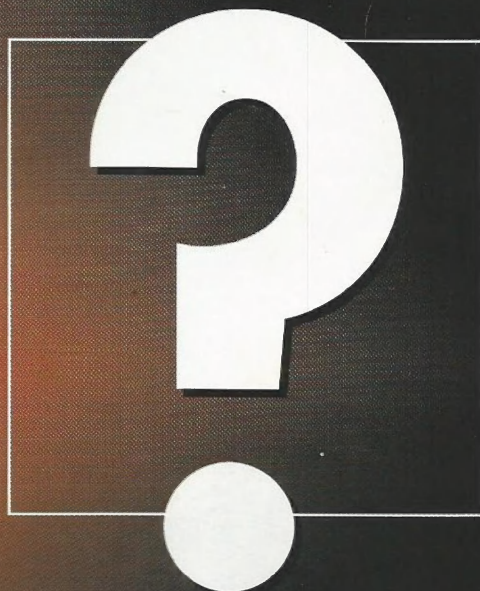
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DREAMWATCH

EDITORIAL

AS I WRITE, THE SHOOTING OF the new DOCTOR WHO telemovie has finished location filming and has commenced studio recording. One week from now, and a day after, shooting wraps on this eagerly awaited project. I will be in Los Angeles to attend the Seventh Seal of Gallifrey convention at which producer Philip Segal will no doubt be recounting his hectic schedule of the last few months, a far cry from last year's event where he enthusiastically told a captivated audience of his ambitions for the project. In the intervening twelve months many have scoffed at his endless assurances that he would eventually succeed in reviving the series, but through his steadfast perseverance and undying devotion he has finally emerged triumphant.

Unbelievably, some are already writing the project off having read leaked details from an earlier draft script, one which was substantially rewritten before being approved by all parties. A clear case of jumping the gun. The only judgement observers are in a position to make until the availability of the completed project is over the choice of Paul McGann as the Eighth Doctor, and I for one have yet to hear any complaints in this department. McGann's distinguished acting career to date speaks for itself; he is arguably the strongest character actor to be offered the role since the great Patrick Troughton. No disrespect to Doctors three to seven, but they portrayed extensions of their own personas whereas McGann has no doubt been cultivating an entirely new character for us to look forward to.

Don't miss the next DREAMWATCH for our complete coverage of Philip Segal's post-filming address to the fans...

— Gary Leigh

8 BABYLON 5's J M STRACZYNSKI

He's on course to pen the entire run of Season Three, but JMS still found time away from his computer to talk to DREAMWATCH about his great masterplan...

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Computer animation has hit the big time, in both television and cinema entertainment, but does it spell the end for the traditional paintbrush...

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With a national newspaper column and radio slot to his name Marcus is one of Britain's foremost TV critics. Read his SF quips every month in DREAMWATCH...

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DreamWatch Online is currently suspended



REBOOT ON ITV © Meridian



THE AVENGERS



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FRONT COVER: David Duchovny,
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in *The X-Files* © Fox

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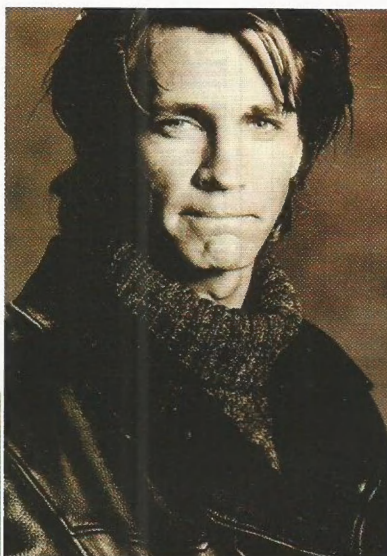
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TARDIS ON COURSE!

AUTUMN SHOWCASE ON BBC1 FOR DOCTOR WHO TELEMOVIE



As Percy Topless in *THE MONOCLED MUTINEER* (1987)



WITH THE TWO-HOUR, \$5 MILLION DOCTOR WHO telemovie now in post-production, information is now coming to light about the new story, which is still being referred to as, simply, "THE DOCTOR WHO MOVIE" by the BBC and Universal.

At two recent Press Conferences, executive producer Philip Segal confirmed that Paul McGann will start his tenure as the eighth Doctor appropriately eight minutes into the film on an operating table in a San Francisco Hospital after Sylvester McCoy's Doctor regenerates due to a bad reaction to drugs. His companion for this story will be heart surgeon Dr Grace Holloway, although both she and the new Master are currently only planned as one-off characters.

At the conference Segal seemed confident that a series could be ready for autumn transmission, and hinted that McGann's Doctor will be very much like Tom Baker's portrayal.

Segal also surprised American on-line users when he re-entered their Forum discussion four days into production, during which he revealed that:

- Sylvester will not have an established companion as he "was on a special mission when the movie starts"...
- There will be a flash back "of sorts" in the story...
- After viewing the "dailies" (i.e. rushes), Segal was very happy with McGann's portrayal of the Doctor (who will not, he emphasised, be called "Doctor Who")...
- The theme music was being written at that time and the new logo being worked on, although the diamond logo has been used 'unofficially' during production...
- Several people had the script but he does not want the storyline published - "It ruins it for everyone else."

He also gave the first indication of two tie-in books: the script with liner notes, published by the BBC, and a *Making of...* volume written by David Howe.

Locations in Vancouver include the Shaughnessy

hospital site and Chinatown (parts of the city which were designated for filming were marked by pink arrows with the word WHO written on them!).

A NEW CAST...

PAUL MCGANN posed for a hastily arranged photo session both in the console room and outside the TARDIS shell at Longleat last December soon after he signed the contract. He is currently riding high on a fresh wave of publicity with the re-release of his first starring role in *WITHNAIL & I*, which is again showing at various cinemas around Britain prior to its release by CIC on video on 25 March.

DAPHNE ASHBROOK, who plays Dr Holloway, appeared as the title character *Melora* in the second season of *DS9* (right) - to be aired on BBC2 on 22 March - and was originally perceived as a full-time crewmember aboard the space station. The American actress also appeared in many Eighties action series such as *KNIGHT RIDER* and *THE A-TEAM* before concentrating on TV Movies, including the role of Phyllis Gates, the secretary caught up in Rock Hudson's sham marriage.

ERIC ROBERTS (centre), brother of Julia, portrays a further persona of the Master. Roberts, 39, will not play the role with a British accent, "But then again, if you're in someone else's body, you can't," said Philip Segal. Roberts features on the cover of the current issue of US gay magazine, *The Advocate*, in conjunction with his role in a new film dealing with AIDS, *It's My Party*.

...AND NEW COSTUMES

The eighth Doctor's Victorian-like costume is said to suit McGann a great deal. He wears brown leather shoes, light grey trousers, a white buttoned shirt, grey cravat, shiny brown-to-gold velvet jacket which is long in the back, and a light brown waistcoat with a slight pattern to it with a pocket watch chain. McGann has a

QUATERMASS BACK ON THE BBC!



Nigel Kneale and Andrew Keir reunited © BBC Radio Picture Publicity

ON MONDAY, 4 MARCH, QUATERMASS returns to the BBC in the guise of Andrew Keir who played the role in the Fifties.

It's all part of Radio Three's Fifties Season, a decade wracked with fears, many of which worked their way into popular culture. Fear of scientists running out of control surfaced in the QUATERMASS TV adventure serials, and in Quatermass Memoirs creator Nigel Kneale returns to the Professor for the first time in more than 15 years with Andrew Keir reprising his movie role in this five-part drama documentary.

Producer Paul Quinn said: "For many people who remember the seminal experience of hiding behind the sofa when the QUATERMASS serials came on the television, Quatermass was the 1950's. His adventures, saving the earth from alien invasion, have gone down in popular cultural history."

In five nailbiting cliff-hangers, Quatermass reflects on his momentous past in conversation with a biographer, while Nigel Kneale himself reflects on the social forces of the Fifties which shaped the Professor – mass fear of nuclear proliferation, power-crazed scientists and the dawning of the space race.

Report by Roger Clark

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH NIGEL KNEALE NEXT ISSUE...

long, curly-wavy light blond wig which thinly covers his entire head.

Grace's costume comprises black slacks and a black jacket with a silvery pattern, tight at the waist and extended around the hips. It is long sleeved and slightly open at the top, underneath which she wears a mauve blouse. Her light brown hair is straight and long.

The location filming in Vancouver, some of which took place around Expo Boulevard, was marked by some wet weather, and saw the crew working through to the next morning on occasion to get scheduled scenes completed. Completing the recording, a week in the studio from 10 February followed.

The two main studio sets have been described as "awesome" by some of the crew. One, a huge gothic cathedral-like structure, is around thirty feet high while the TARDIS console room is vastly revamped although harkening back to the secondary console room as seen in season fourteen. Also Victorian in style, it has wood panelling and books lining the walls and an enlarged console.

MAY RELEASE FOR BBC VIDEO

In explaining the potentially explosive decision to release the adventure on video in May ahead of the terrestrial broadcast in the Autumn, the BBC has stated that this is to enable the TV film to be one of BBC1's Autumn highlights.

Permission has been given by BBC1 Controller Alan Yentob to BBC Worldwide to release the video early, partly to assist in the recouping of their investment, but primarily to try to prevent the numerous pirate copies of the Fox broadcast in America that would undoubtedly otherwise be made.

Ordinary BBC Worldwide releases of past Doctor Who adventures are temporarily suspended following February's *The Hand of Fear* in preparation for the new film release but are expected to return to normal in the summer.



As Marwood in *WINTERBORN* (1987)

● Following the publication of *Bad Therapy*, the final McCoy New Adventure, Virgin Books have secured the rights to publish New Adventures of the Eighth Doctor, with other Seventh Doctor stories becoming officially part of the Missing Adventures range.

● DWM is also licenced to produce new Eighth Doctor stories, and a continuity tie-up of the comic strip featuring the Seventh and Ace will precede their start. Marvel will now publish two specials in the coming months, the first as planned featuring the two Dalek movies on 29 February, and the second on Paul McGann's debut.

● CHANNEL 4 have still not settled on a proposed starting date for Season 3 of *BABYLON 5*. An announcement is anticipated shortly. A slot that had been mooted was the one being vacated by *THE PERSUADERS* (Sundays at 6 pm) at the end of its run in March, but this will now be filled with six science fiction films whose titles are not yet finalised. Other series which have been cleared for showing on Channel 4, but not yet scheduled, include Roger Moore's *THE SAINT* and *THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN*.

● BBC2 have acquired the screening rights to *STAR TREK: VOYAGER*, *SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND* and *VR5*, all for transmission later in the year. There are no plans for repeat seasons of either *DOCTOR WHO* or *BLAKE'S 7*.

● GERRY ANDERSON appears to have been an influence on the designers of the new Concorde II, due for its first flight in 2006, with the cockpit at the rear of the plane making it very similar in looks to the Fireflash featured in *THUNDERBIRDS*. "It never ceases to amaze me how these things crop up many years later," Anderson said.

● TRANSVESTITE comedian Eddie Izzard is starring as a serial killer in a new series of *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*, currently filming in London, and co-starring Alun Armstrong (from BBC2's big blockbuster *OUR FRIENDS IN THE NORTH*). This will go out in America first and then on Sky in the autumn.

● THE BBC is to broadcast a new four part series later this year called "Nightmare: The Origin of the Gothic Novel" in which Christopher Frayling, Professor of Cultural History at the Royal College of Art, traces the routes of classic horror stories.

● PAGES BAR in Page Street, London, reopened on 9 February following a £100,000 refit. The Westminster bar, which is largely frequented by science fiction fans, now enables drinkers to get the impression that they are onboard a starship heading for the stars – before any alcohol has been served!

● **SLIDERS** is finally scheduled to return to the Fox line-up on 1 March, when it will move into the Friday night spot now occupied by *STRANGE LUCK* just before *THE X-FILES*. No decision has yet been made on whether *STRANGE LUCK* will be back next season.

● **JANUARY** saw the two-part *STNG* story *Descent* netting an average of over 4 million viewers during its airing on BBC2 — but left the top ten altogether just two weeks later with the screening of *Interface*. *DS9* dropped out of the top 10 BBC2 shows throughout the month.

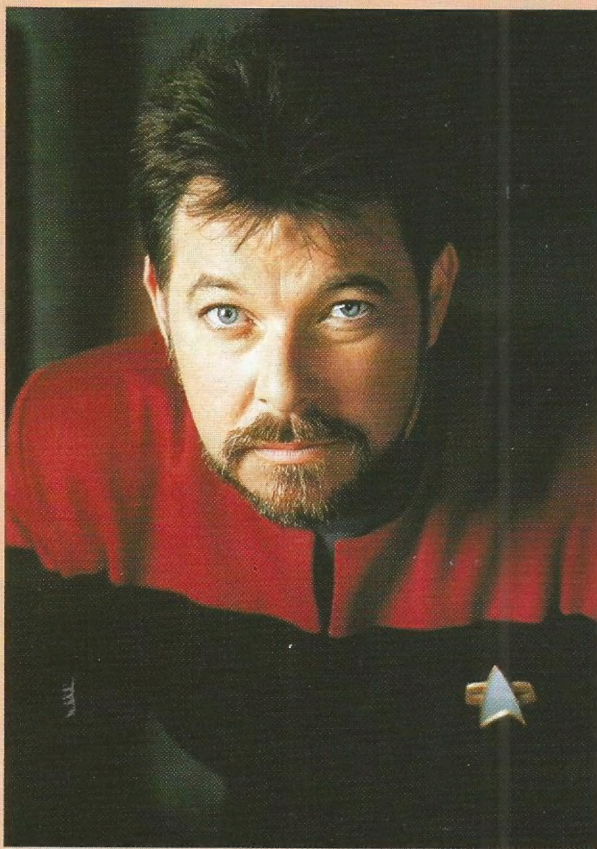
● **LIMITED EDITION** 30th Anniversary *CLASSIC TREK* gift sets will come out during the summer in the States... featuring Barbie and Ken dressed in original series uniforms! Ken will sport a gold command shirt with matching phaser, while Barbie will model a red dress, short skirt and black boots, topped off with a Yeoman Rand hairstyle. She will of course be fully equipped with regulation tricorder. The expected price is \$70.

● **READERS** of *STAR TREK* novels may have been alarmed at recent rumours that *Pocket Books* and *Simon & Schuster* had lost their licence from *Viacom* to produce new novels based on the four *TREK* series. *DREAMWATCH* contacted *Simon & Schuster* who stated that "there is absolutely no truth in this rumour. We have a lot of strong novels ready for publication in 1996."

● A MAJOR 'telefantasy' hit has finally emerged from the 1995-96 season. *THIRD ROCK FROM THE SUN*, a slapstick comedy, starring John Lithgow and Jane Curtin about a team of aliens who masquerade as humans to reconnoitre life on Earth was originally filmed for ABC but eventually picked up by NBC, and immediately hit the top ten in January.

● *LOIS & CLARK* has emerged as the major telefantasy hit this season with the highest ratings it has ever enjoyed (between 10.5-13 million). The series has already been approved for a fourth season while filming is still ongoing for the third!

FRAKES TO DIRECT NEXT TREK MOVIE



IN TIME-HONOURED *TREK* TRADITION THE First Officer of the *Enterprise*, Jonathan Frakes, moves behind the camera to direct his first motion picture - *STAR TREK VIII* - following lobbying from his fellow stars.

The story is now officially confirmed as featuring the Borg and the 24th Century *Enterprise* crew, with no *CLASSIC TREK* guest stars. Patrick Stewart has had input into the storyline, ensuring that Picard shows leadership and other heroic qualities and that the other *NEXT GENERATION* characters have some good scenes — a perceived failing of the previous film.

The title will no longer be *Resurrection*, which has been announced as the proposed title for *ALIENS 4*. There was also some

feeling from the studio that *Resurrection* might imply that Kirk was not dead at the end of *GENERATIONS*. Filming is set to begin on 8 April.

After shooting *STAR TREK VIII*, Patrick Stewart is to play a flashy villain in a film called *ACTION BOY* - described as a cross between *HOME ALONE* and *DIE HARD* - in which he plays a criminal mastermind. He is also currently working with a British playwright on a new production which he hopes to bring to the stage

in New York next autumn and has started his own television production company which has plans for a mini-series and a sitcom, none of which are to star Stewart himself. His other new venture is a shop in Camden Town called 555 Soul which has been opened by his daughter Sophie to sell the work of a young New York designer.

Frakes, meanwhile, is rolling on all fronts. He will be hosting UPN's new "reality" series *BORDERLINE* on Tuesday nights beginning 5 March. He also hosts *SIGHTS AND SOUNDS*, a new technology showcase on Discovery Channel and is directing a CD-ROM called *Murder at San Simeon*.

Kathleen Toth

Duchovny Ultimatum: Less X-FILES or I Quit!

IN A SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT at the start of February, David Duchovny revealed he had given his TV bosses an ultimatum: "Give me more time off or I quit."

Duchovny is keen to capitalise on the worldwide success of the series (see the *X-FILES* News Extra, pages 20-23) and wants to be available to take up the offers. "I love outside work," he said, "But I haven't done any since the show began. I want to do 22 episodes rather than 25. It would be hard for me to stay if the producers don't budge."

What this will mean for one of the world's most watched shows is impossible to tell at this moment; *BABYLON 5* had a change of Commander from season one to season two without denting the show's popularity, although Duchovny's undeniable screen charisma will be hard to follow.

Reaction to Channel Change

IN BRITAIN, THERE HAS BEEN MIXED REACTION to the move to BBC1. Reviewing *Fearful Symmetry* for the *Daily Express*, Roy Hattersley believed that the programme would return to being a cult rather than the mainstream detective show the BBC wanted if the plots continued in this vein.

Sam Brady, *Teletext*'s weekly reviewer, went further, describing *The Calusari* as "far too strong for mainstream TV... it was all but a remake of *THE EXORCIST*." *THE X-FILES* had "brought horror and twisted thoughts to the channel that likes to say 'very nice, dear'."

The ratings improvement, to around 9 million viewers, was a cause for pleasure to the BBC, however: "It fully justifies the decision," a spokesman said.

A Very Opened File

SALES OF *THE UNOPENED FILE* HAVE PASSED expectations, entering the sell-through chart at number one and remaining there all month. The rental copies of *Secrets* have remained mid-chart, but the combination of *Squeeze* and *Tooms* only charted for one week, with the former still easily available at video stores from its original release.

To tie-in with the sell-through release on 25 March, Fox Home Entertainment is launching a strictly limited number of official 'X-FILES Forensic Evidence Boxes' at £13.99. Designed to look like a container that would be found at the scene of an FBI investigation, the Forensic Evidence Box will be sold with the 40-minute documentary, *The Secret of the X-Files*.

CARTER v. 'SKEPTICS'

X-FILES CREATOR CHRIS CARTER has been invited to speak at the 20th anniversary conference of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal - entitled *Science in the Age of [Mis]Information* - at New York State University on Friday, 21 June.

Formed in the United States in 1976 by a group of distinguished scientists including astronomer Carl Sagan, CSICOP is a body devoted to the sceptical analysis of paranormal and fringe-science claims such as UFOs, astrology and psychic phenomena — in other words exactly the type of mater-

ial found in a typical *X-FILES* episode!

Although no details are available yet on the subject of Carter's talk, it will in all probability be a response to a critique of the series published in a recent issue of CSICOP's journal, *The Skeptical Inquirer*, which singled out *THE X-FILES* as an example of how television and film media portray scientists as "mad, bad and dangerous to know" and mislead the public into believing paranormal events such as alien abduction are commonplace.

However, the discussion should be amicable as *The Inquirer* admits that "well-informed fans of the show will recognise the programme for what it is — good entertainment."

ALL CHANGE AS BABYLON 5 REACHES HALFWAY MARK



WHILE THE NEW SEASON OF *BABYLON 5* is now well underway in the USA, yet to come is the "New Dark Look". Complementing major changes in direction midway through the third season - and at the exact halfway stage of *BABYLON 5*'s complex five-year story arc - the crew uniforms become a combination of Minbari and Ranger to reflect the close alliance which has developed between Minbar and Babylon 5.

The uniforms are completely black with silver trim with no Earth Alliance insignia, just rank pins. They still remain military in style but are a long way from the Earth Force regulation issue. But the cast say they like the new look and the comfortable fit compared with the heavier Earth Force jackets.

"We're kinda rebels now," commented Bruce Boxleitner, showing his new-look costume to Mira Furlan.

Report and photograph: Brian Cooney

B5 Merchandise Hits Top Gear!

A SECOND SERIES OF *BABYLON 5* TRADING Cards is on the way from Fleer together, and a second batch of *Babylon 5* Micromachines has been unveiled.

The new Micromachines will include an Earth Alliance Atmospheric Shuttle, Narn Heavy Cruiser, Earth Force One, a Centauri Passenger Ship, a Narn Heavy Dreadnaught and the Marie Celeste.

Upcoming *BABYLON 5* novels include *Clarke's Law* by Jim Mortimore, *The Touch of Your Shadow*, *The Whisper of Your Name* by Neil Barrett Jr, *Betrays* by S M Stirling with three more to follow. These will see publication in the US in February and March by Dell Books with Bantam following in the UK later.

The A-Z of Babylon 5 and *Creating Babylon 5*, both from David Bassom, are published in March.

There's even a limited edition *BABYLON 5* screensaver due anytime from Sound Sources, available only on import in the UK, and a series of free collectors cards being given away with the Warner Videos.

Roger Clark

● UP AND COMING...

LOIS & CLARK: (11/02) I Now Pronounce You...

(18/02) Double Jeopardy

(25/02) Memory Lane

(to be followed in March by the first episode written by Teri Hatcher!)

BABYLON 5: Walkabout (18)

Grey 17 is Missing (19),

'And the Rock Cried Out,

No Hiding Place' (20).

VOYAGER: (26/02) Lifesigns

by Kenneth Biller, which sees the Doctor creating a holographic program of a desperately ill Viidian female...

Investigations by Jeri Taylor in which Paris is kidnapped by Seska and the Kazon...

Deadlock by Brannon Braga, another parallel universes collide story when Janeway discovers an identical *Voyager* with an identical crew. Only one can survive...

DEEP SPACE NINE:

Accession, in which Camille Saviola returns as Kai Opaka as a legendary Bajoran claims he - not Sisko - is the Emissary of the Prophets.

THE X-FILES

(23/02) Pusher

by Vince Gilligan

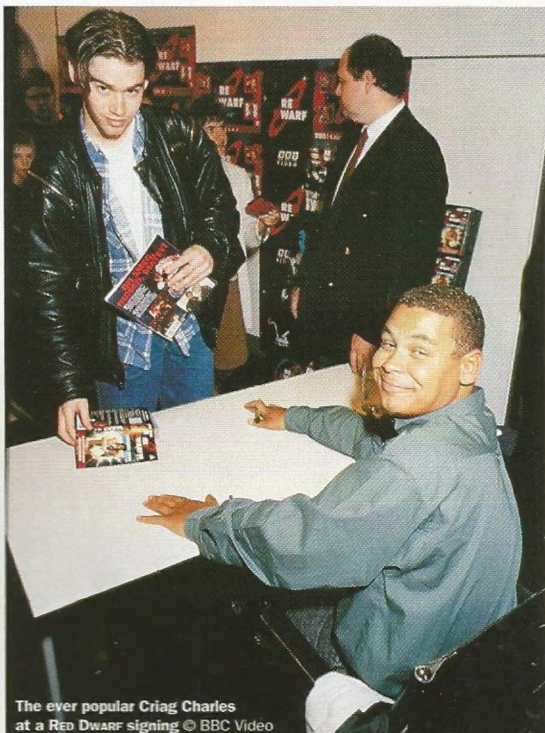
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BARRIE TO QUIT AS CHARLES RETURNS FOR RED DWARF VII?

THE BBC HAS announced that a new series of *RED DWARF* is underway for transmission next January. Furthermore a BBC spokesman was able to confirm that Craig Charles would definitely be part of the crew, and said "It's difficult to imagine *RED DWARF* without him."

However, it now transpires that Chris Barrie is only prepared to commit to two episodes of the new season, following what one newspaper described as "personality clashes".

The *RED DWARF* production office, Grant Naylor Productions, hoped that preproduction on the new series would begin in April with filming to start in May once all



The ever popular Craig Charles at a *RED DWARF* signing © BBC Video

contracts are finalised.

DREAMWATCH will bring further news and a set report later in the summer.

Thanks to all the fans who assisted the Sci-Fi Channel in its exploration of the Doctor Who phenomenon at The RYL-CON 3 Convention.

See you all in another time and relative dimension in space

To receive the Sci-Fi Channel contact your local cable operator.

To receive the Sci-Fi Channel via astra satellite tune to transponder 47 (11,170 GHz/3 H) or call Sky

The newly revealed Kosh – but many more surprises and revelations await fans of **BABYLON 5**...
© Warner Bros

"Babylon 5 is my life..."

YOU HAVE TO HAVE BEEN HIDING UNDER A ROCK in cyberspace not to have been exposed to **J MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI**, creator and executive producer of **BABYLON 5**. Straczynski, a long time computer net user, has pioneered use of the medium to publicise his syndicated science fiction series and to stay in touch with fans who hang on the edge of their keyboards each season awaiting word that the space saga has been picked up for another year in a quest to complete its 5-year pre-planned storyline.

Besides the twists and turns of **Babylon 5**'s complex plot, additional drama has been provided this season by Straczynski's own effort to become the first person (as far as anyone yet knows) to write an entire season of 22 one-hour episodes for one series, while also keeping involved in virtually every other aspect of **BABYLON 5**'s production process.

He has written two novels and plans a screenplay as soon as he has time, but his work has been most extensive in television; as story editor and primary writer for the new **TWILIGHT ZONE** series, as story editor on **JAKE AND THE FATMAN** (where he was on staff with **STAR TREK**'s Jeri Taylor), and as a writer and producer on **MURDER, SHE WROTE**.

Kathleen Toth spoke with Joe Straczynski about his plans for the latest series among other topics on 5 January...



DREAMWATCH: IT SEEMS PRETTY DEFINITE NOW THAT you are going to write the entire third season of *BABYLON 5* yourself. Correct?

J Michael Straczynski: It looks that way, yes.

I am assuming that part of the reason is that the number of what are now usually called "arc" stories is increasing and you are the only person who can write those?

The answer is yes, and no. There will be more arc stories next year than this year, but I can probably use some freelancers next year. The problem this year is that there are so many changes happening on the show, and the pieces are moving on the chessboard very rapidly. After this season, everything is more or less stabilized and you can go to a freelancer with things more or less in place. The arc stories will still be coming but everyone will be more settled down then. These are not unforeseen turns, they are things that have always been planned for this year. The first year was setting up the universe and the characters, the second year was the Shadows starting to come into place for the first time, and now things are starting to hit the fan and splattering all over the wall — and I know where it is going to go whereas somebody else

make time. I use the net for punctuation. What that means is that I don't write down a scene in a script until I've played it over in my head 4, 5, 10 times, whatever it takes until it flows seamlessly and I can see it like a movie. And I'll be running this movie and a hiccup pops up somewhere and I put it on the backburner and I'll chew on this subconsciously for an hour. And if I leave the keyboard during that hour to watch TV or have a sandwich, two hours will go by, but if I stay on the keyboard I'll maybe go on CompuServe for a bit, and after I've done that I'll have worked out the scene in my head and I'm back into it. The Net in a way keeps me at the keyboard instead of wandering off, so in a way it helps the work. Also, I don't have a life! I don't see movies anymore. *BABYLON 5* is my life. I'm here at the stage all day, and sometimes at lunch I'll pop on the Nets for a few minutes. So it's workable, it's just a question of not doing anything else in your life!

What do you think is the value of doing that as much as you do? It is more common now to see producers with new shows make their presence known, but you do much more than anyone else.

There are several reasons. I was one of the first

What has been the creative process behind *BABYLON 5*, and how did you get where you are now?

I kind of got the idea while I was working on *CAPTAIN POWER*, in 1986, and wrote the first draft of the treatment in 1987. The original pilot screenplay for what you saw as *The Gathering* was written in 1987. In that same year I wrote the bible for the series, and most of my notes for the progression of it which I worked on and added to over a series of years. I was concerned with acting responsibly and not going over budget on the pilot. In the past SF has always gone over budget to a hideous extent which is why there has been so little of it, so I thought there has got to be a better way of doing it. As a thought experiment, I came up with this idea for a show that could be done, and done reasonably, by staying in the same place instead of going off to strange worlds every week. That led me to a space station and then to diplomatic stuff, and so on. I was just sort of doodling in my head with it, and then suddenly I just sort of saw the whole story, from beginning to end, in a flash. I saw how it could be laid out, how it could be structured, the broad strokes of it. I spent the next couple of years trying to transcribe what I saw in that

...I'm here at the stage all day, and sometimes at lunch I'll pop on the Nets for a few minutes... it's just a question of not doing anything else in your life!"

might not know! I probably could do it, but I think I might want to farm things out a bit here and there. But next year is next year, and right now my main concern is this year.

I wondered how planned it all was because you have indicated on occasion that some things come along that you do not necessarily plan and the story just sort of ends up taking off in a new direction.

In a couple of cases that is true, one in particular [season three's] *Interludes and Examinations*. I first started something, then the deeper I got into the episode the more things started happening under my feet and things shifted in another direction, and some very strange things happen — but it makes a lot of sense.

You have now completed 17 episodes for this season?

Yes, 17 so far, plus the last five from last season, it's really 22 episodes in a row that I've done. I have found out that in the history of American television no one person has ever written an entire season by himself, and in British television Terry Nation did it on the first season of *BLAKE'S 7*, but that was only 15 episodes. [sic] So it's kind of a benchmark — maybe we can get some publicity out of it for the show!

How do you find time to do all this and be involved on all these computer services almost every day? Some people insist that you must have people logging in under your name to handle it all.

If my name is on it, I wrote it! Basically, you

guys on CompuServe long before *BABYLON 5* ever existed, since 1984. Do you change your habits because more folks know your name and you have a show? I say no. Being a writer, whether on *TWILIGHT ZONE* or *MURDER, SHE WROTE*, just happened to be what I did. My decision, as well as not changing my life was, look, by doing this I help, in essence, to create an educational experience. I've been a teacher in the past, and one of my main bugaboos is that I am trying to demystify television production. My sense is that viewers really cannot control or influence television until they understand how it is done.

When I realised that people were saving my comments I saw that as a chance here to create a document, which follows the birth of a show through the pilot and through three years so far. I've gotten letters from professors and telecommunications students, and viewers who look at this stuff and say now they understand why things happen the way they do. How the industry works. When this thing is finally done, those documents will be there, 5, 10, 15 years from now, for people to use to determine how to get what they want.

Finally, up to now people have come in for a few weeks to promote their shows and then they go away. My sense is that science fiction fans are the most exploited fans there are. They are told to line up, buy this stuff and get out. They deserve a little respect. It's a question of personal responsibility. Frankly, a lot of television people would benefit from the experience; given the insular nature of the business. They could learn what the actual audience is thinking instead of reading the ratings every week.

moment of clarity.

I wrote the script in '87 and we started taking it around to every studio. We took it to HBO, we took it to Paramount, Universal, ABC, NBC, Spelling. We knew we had to find someone who would understand immediately what it was and it took us 5 years to find those individuals; Evan Thompson over at Chris-Craft Television and Dick Robertson at Warner Brothers. We went to Warners in '89-90, we announced our show in the trade newspapers with the name *BABYLON 5* for the first time in November of 1991. The following January, Paramount announced *DEEP SPACE NINE*. We went into production on the pilot in July of 1992 and ended up airing it in February of 1993.

As I recall, there was then a longer gap in going ahead with filming the series then you had anticipated?

You have to understand that Warners felt very strongly, as did most of the studios, that the market could not sustain more than one space/science fiction show at the same time. They already had *STAR TREK*, and then when *DS9* got announced they almost pulled the plug on it — not only were you going to have two science fiction shows, they were both space station shows! We ended up having to wait until after the pilot aired to get the go ahead. Once this was done, they got right into line behind us. Our PTEN liaison, Gregg Maday, was very dubious at first. He didn't think we could do it for the budget, on time, and so on, and when I showed him it could work he said he was wrong and has been our greatest ally at Warners ever since. >

"My sense is that science fiction fans are the most exploited fans there are. They are told to line up, buy this stuff and get out. They deserve a little respect."

The next crisis was the departure of Michael O'Hare and the casting of Bruce Boxleitner as a new commander for the second season. Why was this done, and what are the differences you perceived between Sinclair and Sheridan?

First you have to understand how I see the series overall. In the TREK series you have your cast there from day one and the cast is always going to be locked. The Captain is always going to be the Captain of the ship and he's always going to be there, unless something hideous happens or the actor wants out or something. This show is designed differently, that's why the pilot had Londo's narration; the first year has Sinclair's; the current season has Ivanova... we will change the narration every year. There really is not any one person here who is the hero of the show, it's an ensemble, and my theory going into this is that everyone is expendable, if it will profit me and profit the story. If tomorrow I decided that it would make my story better if Sheridan were turned into a giant blue space moose, I would do that without a second's hesitation. The writer's first and primary obligation is to the story.

Late in the first season I was breaking out the stories for the second season, and in all of them Londo was coming to the fore, Delenn was doing things, the Shadows were coming into it more, and I found that Sinclair was becoming an expositional device. He had no direct connection to this stuff. His connections were all to the Minbari, the Battle of the Line, the other Babylon station. All these things were in the background, but not in the foreground. This started to worry me because, as any writer will tell you, you learn things writing a novel that you learn no other way. Outline to your heart's content, no plan survives contact with the enemy, and the actual writing is the enemy. That's where you find out what works and what doesn't work. I called Michael in and explained the problem and said "I think it will make the story work better if we take Sinclair away for a while and bring in someone who has this connecton." At first I thought of bringing in someone who was under Sinclair but I needed someone who was there in a pivotal position, so finally I said we need to take him off the board. So we agreed to meet up somewhere down the road again and get back into the story again. I said, "I don't know how much that is going to be, or how long that is going to be, but I trust you and you trust me." He was fine with that.

That's when I brought in Sheridan. I frontloaded his character in that first couple of episodes with the missing wife which led us right to Za'Ha'Dum, which is the Shadow connection. I needed someone who was more of a soldier than a diplomat at that point, and also more of a loose cannon. Sinclair would not have taken some of the chances with those around him that Sheridan would. He's a little more on the edge in

some ways. Sinclair has already been through the hero's journey and come out the other side, his transformation is finished. Sheridan is just beginning the hero's journey. He came out of the war shining like silver — he's set up perfectly for a fall, and he's going to fall a long way and have to climb back up again, which is the hero's journey, and that is a very large part of the arc. Storywise and characterwise I got a lot out of bringing in this individual.

Now this season we are bringing Michael back in a two-parter, in which he is in almost every scene. There are major revelations about him, about his character, his background, where he is going. He called today that he had gotten the script finally for the two-parter, and he is excited about it and thrilled. I think it is going to be really good for him and for the fans. There are scenes with him and Sheridan and him and Ivanova, and, of course, with Marcus as Ranger One. It's got a lot of good stuff in it.

Has there been concern that the show is too complex for serial television — all these changes, all these characters in a story designed to unfold over five years?

There are always people who will say you can't do this or that, and almost invariably they are wrong. It is sort of on the edge, but what we have discovered is that the audience is there, they just had to discover that we are here. What we discovered is that a certain percentage of those who stay through two episodes will remain as constant viewers — about 30 or 40%. The audience can handle it if they get a chance. As viewers our tastes have been bastardized for years by a general diminishment in quality, in attention span and so on. They feel that the audience are chimps, who don't understand, who don't have the patience for more than a few lines of dialogue at a time.

The ratings are growing, slowly, but they are up each season. Will we ever be a huge success a la STAR TREK? No, probably not. I want to tell this story. If it takes 10 million viewers to keep it on the air and I get 10 million and one, I'm happy. I told the story and it will be around for decades to come as other people discover it, particularly as it gets into syndication where they can watch it every day. It becomes a more intense experience as it changes in front of you every day. So I think we are in no particular danger right now of being cancelled. It looks pretty good.

In national averages you are generally placing between 3 and 4 in ratings and rank in the 40's and 50's out of all syndicated programmes which number about 250, but you run much more strongly in selected cities.

We are very strong in some major markets pulling a 12 or 15 share, which is huge. We often

beat DS9 here in Los Angeles. The national numbers go down because a lot of the stations in the hinterland have put us on at midnight or two in the morning, dragging the average down. It helps, too, that we are not a very expensive show — if we cost as much as DS9 or VOYAGER, I think our position would be very tenuous.

And you just got approval for an official fan club?

Yes, it took two years to convince Warners that anyone would be interested! We will have a Web site up and going in a few weeks. We plan on a quarterly newsletter and offering a few select items here and there for sale. We want to maintain quality over quantity. We may do a convention in about a year.

And you have been discussing the possibility of some kind of direct-to-video movie to be done in time for the summer?

I may have misspoke myself. It would have to be shot between seasons three and four, to be released during season four. It's something Warners approached us about and it really hasn't progressed much beyond the talking stage.

Are the full run of season three episodes going to air in Britain ahead of the US like they did last season?

I suspect not, although I don't know for sure, but I think Warners would like not to have that happen again!

This whole year is paying off all the things we set up last year. *Voices of Authority* deals with The First Ones and with President Clark and how much he was actually involved in the assassination of his predecessor. That sets us up for an escalation that leads up to a major confrontation about halfway through the season, where Babylon 5 must rethink its relationship to Earth and what has gone before. After episode 10, the very nature of the show is actually different than what it was. I am waiting for someone to say, "Oh my gosh, the ratings weren't good enough, so he changed it," which is also not true. We try to make it more active in many respects. We had Delenn in the second season saying to Kosh that we can't warn G'Kar's homeworld about what's coming because it would alert the Shadows about us. What happens if he should find this out? This show is about responsibility and obligations and consequences. We now get consequences for all the stuff that happened in the second season.

In this season, everyone's birds come home to roost — Sheridan, Kosh, Franklin. *War Without End* shows the flipside of *Babylon Squared* and the consequences of where that went. Lots of stuff will be going on!

J Michael Straczynski, thank you very much! ■

LETTERS

LETTERS/Q&A BY POST: *DreamWatch*, PO Box 1015, Brighton BN2 2YU OR E-MAIL: dwbleigh@pavilion.co.uk



PAUL MCGANN - A TIME LORD FOR THE NINETIES

Phillip Tricker,
Sudbury, Suffolk

AT LAST! POSITIVE, OFFICIAL NEWS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DOCTOR WHO. The lead actor appears to be a good choice for the part; young, but not too young, Paul McGann certainly looks right and I know the bloke can act. Presumably he will be sporting an English accent in the role, and hopefully he will be allowed to speak in English as well (as opposed to American). STAR TREK's Patrick Stewart may have spoken with an incredibly British accent, but I cringed at the American pronunciations of his words in the series. Please let the Doctor escape with his grammar intact!

I am delighted that Sylvester will get a chance to do more than a spit & cough appearance and get to see a proper regeneration sequence, which is the perfect way to introduce the character to a wider American audience. They will learn about the concept of regeneration as we all get to know the new Doctor.

As for what causes the Doctor's regeneration... Well, I think the Doctor should cross an American road, but look right instead of left and get knocked down by a Greyhound bus! Upon regenerating, he mutters... "Everywhere else in the Galaxy they drive on the left..." or, "I've survived Daleks, Cybermen, Sontarans and even traffic wardens only to be defeated by Henry Ford!"

Phil Harrison,
Warrington

...I GUESS NOW THAT PAUL MCGANN HAS BEEN NAMED AS THE new Who, fans will be indulging themselves in the old habit of rubbing the actor before he's been

handed the TARDIS key. For myself I think that McGann's long track record speaks for itself, and perhaps suggests that he will see the Doctor as a character part, a la Troughton. Above all else, he must be a Doctor for the '90s. I want to thank Alan Yentob and Philip Segal for their tireless efforts over the years, and now it's finally happening I can hardly believe it - real DOCTOR WHO again, and not self-indulgent new/missing adventures fiction. He's back, and it's about bloody time! (Perhaps Mr Yentob will now do that interview he promised you?)

Great to see DREAMWATCH going from strength to strength. Being a long-time reader from the DWB years I still rate it way above all the other magazines. How about interviewing Nana Visitor in the future?

Bernard Duff,
University College Dublin, Ireland

...MY INITIAL THOUGHTS ARE THAT THE THREE (OR IS THAT FOUR) main bodies responsible for the new movie have had to compromise. Considering DOCTOR WHO is supposedly starting from scratch once again, Paul McGann is remarkably young to play a lonely wise wanderer like the Doctor. Peter Davison was only 29-years-old when he took over the role, but in 1981 DOCTOR WHO had already been running continuously for 18 years and Davison's task was to make the show more viewer friendly after Tom's later years went. Paul McGann has a viewer friendly face to appeal to the US masses but does he really have the authority that an older actor would bring? I see McGann being, like Davison, immensely popular and reasonably successful but ultimately failing to produce a classic portrayal - the perfect blend of authority and eccentricity.

Does it follow that the stories and drama produced will also lack the boldness we always expect from DOCTOR WHO? Don't get me wrong, I am all for the new show and will wholeheartedly embrace the Eighth Doctor's era. I just hope my fears are unfounded and that the show achieves its true heritage as the number one sci-fi drama on TV.

Simon Jerram,
Tameside, Greater Manchester

...THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF PAUL MCGANN AS THE NEW DOCTOR in DOCTOR WHO is excellent news. He's a good, serious actor who will do the part justice and add new facets to the character, and he doesn't seem like the type who will snottily treat the part with contempt, going over the top to prove he thinks he's better than the series itself.



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Q

Sam Nelson: Am I the only person to remember a sitcom called *THE HAPPY APPLE*? Shown around 1982 or '83, it starred Lesley Ash as Nancy, the junior secretary in an advertising agency who discovers she has psychic powers. Can anyone confirm that the show existed? I'm beginning to think it might just have been a nightmare from my warped imagination.

Greg Glenn: Reading the interview with Robert Duncan McNeill in '17 I noticed that he was in the *Twilight Zone* episode *A Message from Charity*. The original short story was written by William M Lee. Any idea on where I can find it?

Chris Krisocki: Nickelodeon broadcast an Australian SF series called *Under the Mountain* circa 1983. I've not seen anything written about it, but I remember it to have been quite chilling to my 11-year-old mind at the time, and it had a great signature tune...

**Mark Burgess,
Romney Marsh, Kent**

...A DAY OR SO AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF Paul McGann as the new Doctor I happened to tune in to a BBC2 schools programme (*THE ANCIENT MARINER*, 1994) and noticed a reassuringly familiar face staring back at me. Sure enough, when the credits rolled Paul's name was there. At that moment any doubts over Paul's ability to deliver the goods was washed away on seeing how well he had performed in just that few minutes of the programme I had seen. I wish him every success.

COSMIC G-SPOT

Steff Davies

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ENJOYED VERY MUCH YOUR LATEST ISSUE (*DREAMWATCH* 18), in particular the Steven Williams (X) interview and the very amusing article 'X marks the G-Spot' by Marcus Berkmann. The latter was entertaining for two reasons. Firstly, it casts an interesting light on the letter you printed on pp12 from S Leatham in which (s)he says "Most real fans do not want Mulder and Scully to get it together". Funny, isn't it, how the only "real" fans of the show are the fans who agree with one's own opinion: I agree with Marcus Berkmann and a lot of on-line fans, and I wouldn't watch it if it weren't for the portrayal of the Scully/Mulder relationship. Secondly, the episode which aired last Friday in the US - *Syzygy* - was all about a cosmic G-Spot and the havoc it wrought in the agents' relationship!

I was also delighted to see the comments on the third season episodes by my on-line friends at Compuserve. I flew all the way to Los Angeles for the weekend just to attend the Burbank convention at which Gillian Anderson appeared for the first (and maybe the last, if her comments in the Los Angeles Times of 11 January stand) time. I met up with Autumn and other on-line friends and I wore a T-shirt I had made up featuring the now-infamous *Rolling Stone* cover of Mulder and Scully in bed together. This was a great hit during the weekend with many people wanting to know where they could buy one! Chris Carter was very impressed with it too, and he and Gillian Anderson were kind enough to sign the T-shirt for me while I was wearing it!

All-in-all a great weekend, and well worth the long trip. Keep up the great X-Files coverage.

**Miss Johnson,
Huntington, York**

...I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO STAND BY EMMA Bate (*DREAMWATCH* 18) with regards to her comments about the selfishness of some fans towards the influx of viewers that *THE X-FILES* has lately enjoyed. I have had to put up with being branded a weirdo sci-fi nutter or an X-Phile for the past year and a half because I recognised the show's quality early on. It is with some satisfaction that I now find the same people who ridiculed me, during the first season, crawling on bended knee dying

to know what on earth happened to Mulder's sister, who this Tooms geezer is and begging to borrow my video tapes of the first season. I think it's great that people are just discovering the show - word of mouth has eventually kicked in and more people are discovering what the rest of us have begun to take for granted: a well written, well acted, stylish show with ideas and a very distinctive paranormal bouquet.

Which brings me to my final point. In answer to S Leatham in the same issue, any X-Phile worth his/her salt could tell you that 'M F Luder' was the anagram used as a pseudonym by Mulder for his *OMNI* article in season one's *Fallen Angel*. **Mulder will have to go elsewhere in future following the recent sad closure of the American science magazine...**

**Claudine Wyeth,
Crowborough, East Sussex**

...I MUST ADMIT I FANCY DAVID DUCHOVNY LIKE crazy, but it's certainly not the reason I watch *THE X-FILES*. I understand and enjoy the storylines, but I know the show's success comes from Duchovny and Anderson's brilliant acting and their characters' relationship (and mysterious men in black suits with spiteful eyes who love a fag now and then!). I curse girls I meet at school who have an 'X-FILES Addict' sticker on their pencil tins from a teen-magazine because I know they're not true fans, especially when they come up to me every week and ask me what the episode was about that aired the

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night before because they weren't paying attention to the storyline! I'd die to go back to the days when only a small group of people loved XF, when it was on BBC2 on Thursdays, when some people only noticed it because they were too 'lazy to switch the channel over after TOP GEAR (like me), when I'd go to school on Fridays and ask if my mates watched it and they'd say no... Ah yes, the good ol' days.

By the way, I am stunned by your brilliant magazine. Its glossy pages and colourful pictures is excellent value for £2.20. Full of full packed, intelligent news, information and previews and reviews, it's the only sci-fi mag I ever buy. Your comments are fun, fair and I always have a sense that you always know what you're on about, unlike some writers in other magazines who ask silly questions and say ignorant things.

STOP THE BICKERING!

Duncan Harvey,
Reading, Berkshire

CONGRATULATIONS FOR ANOTHER FINE ISSUE IN DREAMWATCH 18. My only concern however is that recently the quality of the letters page appears to be declining. Whilst it hasn't reached TV Zone levels of banality and stupidity, yet, more than the occasional sad letter is creeping in. The DS9/B5 debate is a prime example. Why do some people feel that the only way they can say something positive about one programme is to make a derogatory comment about another? D A Catt's letter (presumably no relation to the Cardassian Gull!) will hopefully put a stop to the pathetic Blur vs. Oasis style bickering that we've seen recently.

Another thing which amazes me is that some fans still harbour under the belief that the shows they like are made for any other reasons than ratings and profit. Viacom/Paramount are a business and their principle duty is to their stockholders, and if they make more money from 52 episodes of TREK a year than 26, then they'll make those 52 episodes. Ultimately, as non-US viewers we have no influence upon the Nielsen ratings and are unimportant to Viacom/Paramount. This doesn't bother me, as I feel that the various TREKS have all been on the whole entertaining and of high quality. There will always be the odd dodgy episode or retread, but c'est la vie!

Finally, why bother printing letters such as the one by Joe Phillips, the Who fan who doesn't read the TREK or X-FILES stuff? For heaven's sake, get a life! Until the recent announcement of McGann's casting there has been precious little Who news and very little reputable rumour. I'd rather read about something that is alive and running now (i.e. TREK and THE X-FILES) than something which has been in suspended animation for seven years.

No doubt the likes of Mr Phillips will be picketing the BBC and attempting to jam the switchboards when it becomes clear that the new production will not be following the continuity laid down in the New Adventures or employing the creative talents (sic) behind these books on the new production. DOCTOR WHO is important, but let's have articles and news of quality rather than space provided simply because the programme formed the backbone of the old DWB. The show,

for its own self-respect, must earn the right to be featured heavily in the magazine, and I hope its resurrection will not necessarily lead to a dilution of other aspects of DREAMWATCH.

Having got all that off my chest, I hope to see normal service resumed in the letters page, so that once again it becomes an intelligent and non-sad forum for debate.

"Why bother printing letters such as the one by..."? Regardless of the point Mr Phillips was making he was exercising his right to use these pages as an open forum for DREAMWATCH readers to express their views. While we don't have room to print every letter we receive, we do endeavour to include a representative cross-section of views. Mr Phillips touched upon a sentiment echoed by several other DWB diehards who still apparently haven't come to terms with the fact that DREAMWATCH expanded its scope many moons ago!

HISTORY OF THE PRISONER

Jon Abbot,
Portslade, Brighton

DREAMWATCH 17 WAS ANOTHER GOOD READ, WELL designed and easy on the eyes. I hope you won't make it too easy on the brain, though. I was a little disturbed by your reply on the letters page to Paul Wakeman regarding the article on THE PRISONER by Mark Duguid. Just as one of the best ways to understand any time period is to look at its popular culture, so one of the best ways to understand any television series is to examine the time period it was produced in. I don't know Mark's age but I was there in the 1960's, and the picture he paints of the era - admittedly with the gift of hindsight - is largely accurate. That wasn't politics, it was history, and his perception of why THE PRISONER was the way it was - and his understanding of the differences between America and Britain, and American and British culture and the limitations and virtues of both - were, in my opinion, very well considered. Yes, Mark went a bit over the top and off the point toward the end of page 20, but this is where the editor's job to walk the tightrope between edit and censor comes in.

I got the impression from your words that the piece provoked a few other negative responses too, but don't be pressured into shackling your writers into play-safe - let's remember the complainants are expressing a political view by disagreeing, and although I'm not familiar with the DOCTOR WHO dispute Paul refers to, reasoned debate backed by facts and ideas is an admirable addition to a good read. Politics is undoubtedly a mug's game played by charlatans and con men, but let's not confuse politics with ideas, opinions, or arguments, all of which are extremely healthy by-products of the democracy denied to Number Six! Let's not be villagers! Let's not have our dreams watched! DREAMWATCH is no place for politics, but it should be a place for ideas and opinions... otherwise, how can we dream?

INTERNET IMPACT

Nick Brett,
Swindon
NICKB@nshsn3.agw.bt.co.uk

I MUST ADD MY CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR EVER

improving magazine, but I wonder what the future might hold. The Internet is gradually becoming part of our lives and as access into this massive database becomes more common where will it leave the likes of DREAMWATCH? Episode guides and information/news are almost instantly available (for example the week that VOYAGER/BABYLON 5 airs the episode guide is there on the net) as are photographs and so on, even quicktime movie clips! This must impact on the media, and particularly SF magazines like yourselves as your readership is more likely to be interested in Internet surfing. Nick's letter raises several very interesting points, which can probably best be answered by net-surfing readers - that is, if we have any...

The only people who can answer this are net-surfing readers, indeed, if we have any...

PRAISE FROM OLD AND NEW

Andrew Buxton,
Enfield, Middlesex

CONGRATULATIONS ON A FANTASTIC PUBLICATION. I have just purchased my first every copy of DREAMWATCH (issue 17), and I must say that I have never before come across such a well presented, informative and integral journal. This must be the first magazine I have ever read cover-to-cover without coming up for air! The one thing that stuck in my mind was the interviews with the VOYAGER cast. The questions asked were direct and demanding - a very important factor in making an interview work. In my experience, other such magazines ask two or three general questions and let the interviewee babble on about themselves. DREAMWATCH is a stimulating and unparalleled read.

Pete Buss,
Blackpool

...AS A READER FOR NEARLY 10 YEARS NOW MAY I complement you on an always superb magazine. I've always found Starburst and TV Zone worth flicking through in W H Smiths, but DREAMWATCH is the only one worth buying!

By the way, what, oh what has happened to the BBC Video release of the 1980's TV version of DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS? Over the last three years or so various magazines have promised the release but the video has failed to appear.

DON'T BE AN X-FILES MUG

K R McHale,
London N1

WITH THE ONLY LIMITATIONS BEING THEIR SKILL AND imagination, authors of spin-off novels often come up with startling results. Where else could we see STING's Q battling with Trelane from the original series (Peter David's Q-Squared) or The Fourth Doctor surfing the global information super-highway (Justin Richard's System Shock)? I hope, for the sake of X-FILES fans, that HarperCollins will eventually offer something of similar quality. To appeal to fans and be commercially successful, show-based fiction must remain true to the characters we know, whilst offering strong and/or fresh perspectives on the shows we love. Novels which fulfil these criteria enjoy reprints for many years, but I'm sure the same won't be true of trash like the three X-FILES titles. I would rather purchase an X-FILES mug than be an X-FILES mug.



Mark K: In '18 Nigel Splink described the children's TV series CAPTAIN ZEP SPACE DETECTIVE. The format of the show was something like a 'whodunit' where the action is divided in two with the first part gathering clues and then the studio audience (supposedly space detective cadets) is asked questions about what they've seen before the solution is given in the second part. Yes, the action did take place in front of projected animated backgrounds, which made the whole thing cheap to make, but the model effects of the Captain's space ship in flight were impressive, better in fact than anything DOCTOR WHO was achieving at the time! Brian Smith: The series was set in the year 2095 at the SOLVE Academy for student space detectives. It ran for two six-episode seasons, with Paul Greenwood playing Captain Zep in series one and Richard Morant in series two. Series one ran from 5/1/83-9/2/83 series two from 9/3/84-13/4/84. Marcus Hancock: It went out on weekdays, usually before NEWSROUND.

Helen Knott: The show had a rather catchy little theme song with deeply moving lyrics (Captain Zep, Captain Zep, Super Space Detective, Captain Zep, Captain Zep, Super Space Detective...etc.) and was released as a BBC single. Sam Nelson Only Zep and his assistants were played by on-screen actors and their HQ was the only real set. All the other scenes and characters were represented by pictures over which the cast were superimposed.

Sam Nelson: The DOOMWATCH film set on a remote island which Martin E Edmonds asks about was made in 1972 and directed by Peter Sasdy. It took place on an island off the Cornish (not Scottish) coast. It starred Ian Bannen, Judy Geeson, John Paul, Simon Oates and George (THE FALCON) Sanders. Matthew J Newton: Series regulars John Paul and Simon Oates only made brief appearances. Also featured was Geoffrey Keen, the Minister of Defence in numerous James Bond films. I'm not sure if the film is available on video, but it is occasionally shown on tv.

Matthew J Newton: Paul Clifton's memory is not playing tricks on him. An edited version of the DOCTOR WHO story The Sea Devils was indeed shown as a replacement for cricket on Friday, 27 May 1974 between 11.15-12.45pm.

Despite the over-exaggeration of nostalgic commentators it's probably reasonable to concur that Britain's modern cultural highpoint was indeed the decade repetitively referred to as the Swinging Sixties. Post-war austerity thawed to produce a classless consumer society where working-class Liverpudlians with guitars could shake the world. The Beatles and The Stones conquered America; Mary Quant was the toast of all the international editions of Vogue. The influence of this new British Empire spread far and wide. Why, even the lowly medium of television increased in influence and importance, and perhaps the most significant TV drama - in terms of both innovation and worldwide sales - was *THE AVENGERS*, a picture postcard from Swinging Britain.

Alistair McGown goes undercover...



STYLE WITH

or... "Look - Stop Me if You've Seen T

CHANNEL 4, TUESDAYS, 6.00PM
BBC2, FRIDAYS, 6.25PM

THE SEEDS HAD BEEN SOWN IN THE CRAMPED confines of the ABC television studios at Teddington. At the turn of the decade television was only just learning what it could be: in the 'Thirties, it had transmitted what were no more than scaled-down music hall variety shows and by the 'Fifties it was attempting to transfer plays from the theatre to the small screen. Television's only contribution to the canon of performing arts were genre items: the quiz show, the hospital drama, the soap, the crime series, all styles of programming borrowed from America.

ABC's *POLICE SURGEON* had been a rather unspectacular entry to the latter genre category but its star Ian Hendry was a popular enough hero to prompt Sydney Newman and Leonard White to create a new vehicle for their burgeoning star. *THE AVENGERS* - 'a helluva good title - but I don't know what it means,' as Newman exclaimed - was intended to take the crime series away from the humdrum routine associated with the police series. Ian Hendry's Dr Keel wasn't attached to the police as he had been in the position of police surgeon Dr Brent. Instead, his new contact with the criminal underworld was to be the shadowy secret service man John Steed. Steed's mysterious status would hopefully accommodate action more in line with the exotic James Bond novels of Ian Fleming, even if the series was to remain based in this country, and not be permitted the luxuries granted the globe-trotting John Drake of *DANGER MAN*, which would premiere the same year, 1961.

So this new urban spy series was stealing from the Bond novels, popular pulps since 1953, but by borrowing elements from outside the immediate environment, in this case the confines of television crimebusting, it appeared quite novel. The live show began with Keel's fiancée murdered by drug dealers, making Keel and Steed the 'Avengers' of the title, but before long it transpired that the show was too earnest to really grab the viewers and their growing desire for light-hearted escapist thrills. To this end, the producers allowed old Etonian Patrick Macnee to inject more of his personal foibles into the character of Steed, to complement Hendry's bedside manner. Macnee's love of the good things in life made Steed the best-dressed undercover man in London, and thus brought him closer to the ideal of the secret agent as a focus for daydreaming.

The series began to reflect Britain's classless society but in a cracked mirror. A society not based on class must focus on money and power. The criminal community is already a classless one: violence and menaces can be hired from the aristocratic Deacon of The Frighteners. He works out of a smoky back room behind a greengrocers shop but appreciates fine brandies. His clients include the powerful businessman Sir Thomas Waller - he might operate from his modern high-rise office in the City, but is united with the underworld by his underhand methods. *THE AVENGERS* attracted a better class of villain.



Patrick Macnee with Ian Hendry in *Dance with Death* (1961)...

The first season had been a success and things may have continued as they were had it not been for Hendry's departure and the crisis it forced upon the show. With Macnee's Steed just as popular as Hendry's Keel, the secret agent would now become the lead, but with a new partner. The appointment of Honor Blackman as the leather-clad Cathy Gale was of course the show's first outrageous idea, and one which could only have happened in the early 60's climate of 'anything goes'.

A spirit of adventure gave young talents a chance in television. Old hands like Newman and White supervised a team of writers, directors and

designers who had known a decade of television watching. Baby-boomers like Richard Bates, Roger Marshall and, later, Brian Clemens had a new vision of what television should be like - tongue-in-cheek, sophisticated, knowing and, above all, entertaining without being mindless. So youth was the key to its unlikely success, as it was in every other field of entertainment at this time. This collective of writers in their mid-to-late twenties and directors in their early-to-mid thirties gave the show new energy, their imaginations fired by the possibilities that the Steed and Gale format allowed. White's experience told him that bringing in a talented, tough and attractive female lead to play a man's part was a risk, but the times let him take that risk.

The dynamic production team had millions of sophisticated friends across the country who appreciated the in-jokes and the 'kinky' qualities of the series. The word 'kinky' has dogged *The Avengers* down the years. It had previously referred to bizarre sexual practices, but in Sixties parlance it just meant 'different'. Cathy Gale's leather outfits and strong woman antics blurred the definition. Now it's impossible to hear the word without conjuring up images of Cathy and her infamous 'Kinky Boots'. *THE AVENGERS* was the hippest thing on television, 'keeping the bright young things of Belgravia and Chelsea in on Saturday nights' according to *The Spectator*.

THE AVENGERS was a show designed for television, at a time when talking heads still filled the screen. Over the second and third seasons the series developed its obsession with surfaces, making it the first rigorously 'pop' series, more acid than *THE SAINT*, less 'accurate' than *DANGER MAN*. Designers were performing tiny miracles at the Teddington studios. They realised that if you put potted plants directly in front of shot it made the set look twice as big. 'A bank' was just a grille and some money on the counter. Directors and designers finally realised the obvious: that television is a visual medium. It is telling that the definitive *Avengers* director, Robert Fuest, was a designer in its earliest videotaped era. *THE AVENGERS*, then, was the perfect match between witty, contemporary writing and a keen eye for visual style. Commentator Michael Wolff criticised the Council of Industrial Design Awards for 1965 by saying "the sort of designers in Britain who have really given people a bang in the last two years are Ken Adams, art director for the Bond films; Frederick Starke with his clothes for Cathy Gale; and Ray Cusick, with his Daleks." With a new understanding of popular culture *THE AVENGERS* was almost art. [A detailed overview of the Honor Blackman era appears in *DREAMWATCH 11*]

A show that so believed in style over substance was hemmed in by ABC's three-take studio practice, and so *THE AVENGERS* moved to film for its 1965 season under the aegis of a new production team. Incumbent associate producer Brian Clemens - writer of six Season Three stories - understood *THE AVENGERS* to be an essentially British satire working within the thriller format. He developed the show's witty edge by commissioning a select pool of writers and in many cases completely rewriting their submissions. Albert ➤

H SUBSTANCE

his... But There Were These Two Secret Agents"

Fennell became THE AVENGERS style guru - his experience in feature films ensured that the product looked right. It is Fennell whose contribution to THE AVENGERS is one of the greatest and yet one of the most overlooked.

The Steed & Cathy era had pioneered style over substance and reduced - or raised - the crime series to the level of entertainment, made cops comic-strip, but Clemens blessed a perfect marriage of style and substance. Fast-paced direction, trend-setting fashions and location filming were window-dressing to a satire on modern values. The fourth season of THE AVENGERS was a postscript to the Old Empire set in a picture postcard England. The British Officer class were reduced to gaudily painted toy soldiers, seen as jingoist, bumbling idiots forced into private sector villainy to give them a role in a changing world.

Such landed gentry found it impossible to adjust to progress - both social and technological. In the real world, working class heroes like Lennon, Twiggy and David Bailey were the new role models, while in 1964 Prime Minister Harold Wilson was looking ahead to a new Britain 'forged in the white heat of scientific revolution'. Steed straddled both eras, a Bentley-driving upper class gent of breeding and refinement quite at home in a world of automated factories and high-tech espionage. Emma Peel on the other hand was most definitely mod, the ideal emancipated woman, for whom feminism didn't mean losing her femininity. Intellectually and physically superior to just about anybody, Mrs Peel nevertheless used her feminine wiles far more than Mrs Gale ever did. Diana Rigg brought a more sussed, Sixties humour to the role compared with the austere 'English Rose' charms of former Rank starlet Blackman. And once they'd realised the mistake of dressing Mrs Peel in the 'classic' - and hence greatly retro - fashions of Miss Jean Muir she became the best-dressed mod of all, to boot (thigh length, of course).

It is the burgeoning attitudes of the Sixties that THE AVENGERS plays on, not so much its obvious imagery. THE AVENGERS created its own icons rather than employing then-hip stereotypes - there are no appearances by the Beatles unlike in DOCTOR WHO, there are no nightclubs filled with swinging chicks unlike in DEPARTMENT S, there are no wild eyed hippie drop-outs (man) unlike in RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED). Thus the intelligent viewer of today can identify the mood of the times without the usual clutter of kitsch obscuring his or her view.

This fourth season playfully confuses our modern notions of what telefantasy is. Too often the category is only defined by its associated hardware: the various STAR TREKS are supposedly true telefantasy, set in a world of phasers and transporters, but are no more than re-dressed Westerns with additional rudimentary psychological jargon. BBC's MOONBASE THREE is a classic example of tele-mundane - space travel and living on the moon reduced to procedural duty. THE AVENGERS may just possess the odd killer robot and only one unidentified space alien in its whole history, but in creating an unreal world it is most definitely fantasy for television. With THE AVENGERS you sustain disbelief for the duration, you do not suspend it.

Avengers technology progressed in Season 5: behind the camera the show was made in colour for the first time for the benefit of the American audience, while on-screen mad scientists were madder than ever before. In the Blackman era science was a way to make money, but now it allowed for more outrageous plot devices - yes, science could be fun! Electronics could turn domestic tabbies into killer cats, turn homing pigeons into spy planes, build duplicate Steeds and Emmas, and make mind-swapping an implausible possibility. With the old guard disposed of by Steed and Emma in the previous season, THE AVENGERS focused its cynical eye on the new power brokers - the business tycoons who pushed for automation and productivity but to



...with Honor Blackman in March, 1963...

whom 'business ethics' were oxymoronic. These were modernists without a sense of humour. The Fear Merchants at the Business Efficiency Bureau are ruthlessly efficient in getting rid of the competition; Damayn gets rid of thousands of workers and replaces them with machines so The Winged Avenger gets rid of him!

This was coupled to a second satirical target - the television series. THE AVENGERS poked fun at itself and its action series wannabe clones. In *The Winged Avenger* we see Emma and Sir Lexius Cray atop an obviously fake mountain-top studio mock up replete with wind machine-assisted jabolite 'snow'. The viewer who expects quality will complain about this, only to be silenced by the camera's panning away to reveal that this is indeed a mock up bang in the middle of Cray's study. His line "There's nothing like authenticity," is loaded with double meaning, and may even have been aimed at the producers of series like THE CHAMPIONS who tried to turn the studio into the Antarctic every other week. By making itself total fantasy THE AVENGERS created its own reality, while other spy shows were hampered by their own desires for the mundanely exotic. Clemens: 'THE AVENGERS never went for reality, we were not into trying to make the backlot look like the South of France which they were doing every week on THE CHAMPIONS and THE SAINT.' For Emma Peel's finest hour, Epic, the crew made a backlot look like, well, a backlot, where Peter Wyngarde camped it up big time in a none-too respectful homage to the golden age of Hollywood.

Other big name guest stars peppered the show with memorable performances, but again the production team made sure that everyone fitted into the Avengers' world. While Macnee and Rigg were playing 'extensions of themselves' guest actors were directed firmly so as not to unbalance the show's own reality with a readily recognisable star turn. For example Ronnie Barker played Mr Cheshire, not Ronnie Barker in *The Hidden Tiger*, Ron Moody played Jordan, not Ron Moody in *The Bird Who Knew Too Much*.

The season's first shooting block of sixteen is almost certainly the show's peak: Macnee and Rigg had the playing off pat; Clemens distilled the affectionate disdain for the competition that had brewed in the Blackman era, while simultaneously applying contemporary themes and throwing caution to the wind; Fennell and a team of daring directors created a pop art feast of overblown visuals. Clemens' fresh ideas were now tempered by his own experience so that every script hit the mark and these were subsequently handled by veteran film directors of the standing of Charles Crichton or subjected to the wild extravagances of the likes of James Hill. The second batch of eight episodes were completed under pressure, and though handled just as deftly, exhibited signs of uncertainty. Contrasting *Dead Man's Treasure* - which dispenses with plot altogether, seemingly in order to prove that cars were great in the Sixties - with *Murdersville* and its motives and occasional emotion, shows that the show was headed into unsure territory.

Production wrangles and an impossible shooting schedule left the team at a disadvantage for Season 6. The inexperienced Linda Thorson took over as Tara King to work on a gruelling 33-episode season and it was some time before the fluffy Miss King found her feet. By this time the American ABC network were sending 'representatives' over to view filming, possibly with a view to reshaping the show which they were financing. Though they were reportedly sent packing, this season saw the slow rationalisation of THE AVENGERS' wilful, experimental streak, returning it in many ways to the Blackman era of the tight thriller.

The humour was painstakingly constructed it seemed, even laboured in places, and the innovation was largely to be found in small details. Different type faces and effects were used in each episodes' title credit for example, but the big picture showed Steed and Tara at large in sections of our world, visiting ordinary locations like office blocks in Maxwell Road, Borehamwood or driving down the nearby Shenley Road. The villains were occasionally ruthless and often played dead straight, this season's preoccupation seemingly with double agents and traitors in the ranks.

The last of the old guard were exemplary however. *Game, Fog and Look - Stop Me...* were loaded with mind-boggling visuals bound to hilarious scripts refined to the nth degree since the Rigg era. If they had lost some of that spontaneous edge they were just as funny. Less successful were obvious single-take spoofs such as *Noon Doomsday* (HIGH NOON) and *Legacy of Death* (THE MALTESE FALCON), since THE AVENGERS is more at home spoofing itself.

A new AVENGERS was taking shape, and finally became a coherent whole with episodes that returned to the show's dramatic roots. *The Morning After*, *Love All* and *Pandora* are fine examples of a more cynical humour and darker edge. The playfulness had gone, but then the other pop art movements had lost that too, with increasing commercialisation and the growing banality of the fashion treadmill. The episodes above and plenty of others have an unsettling quality that comes out of their forcing together childish or childlike imagery with a more violent brutishness. As The Beatles looked poised to split up, THE AVENGERS took a few final bad trips and experienced the occasional flashback before the end finally came.

Reruns around the world kept the show going into the early 'Seventies. Diana Rigg herself saw an episode showing in New York and in one of her dismissive moods she told Time magazine 'It was like an early Joan Crawford movie, it had dated so



...Diana Rigg...

fast'. So even Mrs Peel could be wrong about some things. What has dated is THE NEW AVENGERS despite its slightly more recent demise. While THE AVENGERS took place in the magical Avengerland, THE NEW AVENGERS was set in among the corridors of Whitehall and the multi-storey car parks of the home counties!

THE AVENGERS was resolutely its own show, but THE NEW AVENGERS spent too much time looking over its shoulder, either peering back into its own past or sizing up the current opposition. Most storylines found it necessary to include some element from the past, digging up some spy or other from the cold war or a previously unmentioned arch-enemy of Steed's from his original Avenging days. While numerous continuity references were harmless fun the nostalgic elements blunted any satirical edge that the show might have had. Joanna Lumley's Purdey is the show's only real icon, and though she failed to define an era in the way that Emma Peel or Cathy Gale had done, Lumley made her fascinating to watch, and indeed Purdey was the series' biggest eccentric.

The Purdey bob had THE AVENGERS again setting fashions but otherwise THE NEW AVENGERS failed to stand out from the crowd. Brown suits milled around Whitehall rooting out traitors ('Could

it be Steed again this week?' they wondered) and the car chases lacked the savvy of THE SWEENEY. THE AVENGERS had been the show everyone else in television looked to, but the continual interference from the financial backers in France and Canada meant THE NEW AVENGERS lacked any distinctive quality, influenced by as many shows as THE AVENGERS had influenced.

The series' successes were either completely ridiculous (*Gnaws*, *Three-Handed Game*, *Faces*) or pure Sixties pastiche (*The Eagle's Nest*, *Last of the Cybernauts...?*, *Cat Amongst the Pigeons*, *Sleeper*) and overall too few and far between. Rarely less than enjoyable though THE NEW AVENGERS may have been it had failed to break new ground like its predecessor. As a cynical attempt at making a ratings grabber the AVENGERS Mark One production that followed, THE PROFESSIONALS, was far more successful both in terms of viewing figures and in achieving what it set out to do.


THE AVENGERS has left a wide-ranging legacy: MOONLIGHTING deftly developed the self-consciousness aspect while on the other hand VIRTUAL MURDER was but a clone out of its era, with no discernible ideas of its own. Similarly the American-made Eighties incarnation of THE AVENGERS, the woeful *Escapade*, was an old, irrelevant format carrying identikit production values and tasteless innuendo obviously borrowed from CHARLIE'S ANGELS. Brian Clemens, who scripted the sorry farce, should have known better. Likewise Bugs will have to stop recycling NEW AVENGERS ideas if it is to make any impact to my mind. Indeed any project, whether on the big or small screen will need to think long and hard before trying to resurrect the idea (by definition a new idea cannot be used a second time).

It is THE X FILES that is in many ways the new AVENGERS, successfully marrying the imaginative use of genre clichés to a new agenda and what writers perceive to be an (inter)national consciousness. Two professionals - a man and a woman joined together, resisting an obvious sexual chemistry - encounter the bizarre in the line of duty. Same as it ever was... only different. Or is it... kinky? ■

**BRIAN CLEMENS
SPEAKS EXCLUSIVELY
WITH DREAMWATCH
IN OUR NEXT ISSUE...**



...and Joanna Lumley and Gareth Hunt.



LINDA THORSON, the third Avengers lady Tara King, appeared in some of the more bizarre, off beat episodes that the series ever created, and between 1968-69 jostled with some of the most extreme embodiments of evil and destruction the show ever brought to life. In the first of this two-part interview, *Alistair McGown* and *Darren Rea* - men on first name terms with the bizarre - were dispatched to meet her with orders to get the inside story of the original AVENGERS' final years...

BIZARRE INC.

DREAMWATCH: LET'S GO BACK TO CANADA: WHAT can you tell us about Linda Robinson?

Linda Thorson: Oh, that's me! I was brought up in Toronto. I left there in 1965 to go to the Royal Academy in London, when I was sixteen. I always wanted to be an actress. I used to stand on chairs at my mother's cocktail parties and do impersonations of the Queen. By the time I was eight, I was playing Mother Rabbit at Massey Hall in Toronto. When I was eleven or twelve I was doing lots of plays at school but because I was the tallest girl I got to play all the male roles. I then wanted to be different things but I realised that they were actors playing parts.

Was it quite a well adjusted childhood?

I think I was a pretty normal sort of kid. I spent most of my life either practising the piano, or going to school or skating, and I went on to

become Ontario Figure Skating Champion. And then I discovered boys. I think the whole thing sort of became a disaster once I realised there were men in the world...and it's kind of been that way ever since!

You married very young, didn't you?

I was sixteen and I had married Canada's most eminent cameraman, Barry Berg-Thorson. He was twice my age, a terrific chap. He directed me in a play when I was fifteen off Broadway, and we opened on the day that Kennedy was assassinated. All the other theatres went dark that night but it was our opening night and I remember we were all weeping, and crying. It was a theatrical moment!

So did you come over to England because you had a place at RADA?

Well I came over because Barry really wanted to

work with the BBC and when we got here - I think it was September 1965 - he was told that due to the quota system there was already unemployment and he really wasn't going to get a job. My part had been that I would audition for RADA and I got a scholarship. Barry was happy for me but he wasn't that happy, because he probably didn't want to stay. He got a freelance job and I started at RADA in January '66, so that really kept me here. And then we split up - he had an affair with a make up girl and they ran off to Paris! I wrote letters to my parents for two years signing his name with a different pen at the bottom because I didn't want them to know that he'd left me and I was all alone.

Before you'd finished at RADA you got the part of Tara King?

Yes, it was just at the end of RADA that John Huston came to the studios looking for a young aspiring actress to do his movie *SIMPLE DAVY*. We got into a conversation about Toronto, and it was his favourite city. I was very flattered by all this and he actually intimated that I would get the part, and I remember telling everyone that I was going to do this film. Then, I think it was just after graduating, he took me to *Rules* in Maiden Lane, and said: "Look, you can't really be in the movie because John Hurt's going to do it and you're too tall for him. We've found this other young actress with more experience, Pamela Franklin, and I feel really badly about it, so I'm going to send you to see this man Robert Leonard who's casting the replacement for Diana Rigg in a television series *THE AVENGERS*." I knew nothing about the whole thing - I didn't know who Diana Rigg was. Anyway I then rung everyone up and said, "Oh, I'm not going to be in this big feature film but I'm going to star in a TV series".

Two or three Tuesdays after that I went along for the meeting with the executives, thinking that we were going to discuss when I would start playing this part, and there were two hundred other actresses in the waiting room. And that's how it started. And then there were fifty and then twenty five then eight then three and then there was me.

Once you got the part they sent you off to a health farm. How did you react to that?

I didn't know when I went to the health farm that I'd got it, so when I learned I had I'd been on hot water and lemon for several days and I think I said something like "I don't even really care. Oh God, I just wish someone would give me some food"! I was at the point where I was terribly happy to hear the news but... I don't know - I wish I had been thinner, I think I'd have looked a lot better on camera and everything but there was no way that I was going to be able to lose the weight at that age.

Were you screen tested?

To finally get the okay from the network in America I had to do a short segment of just "action". We filmed it all in one day on Hampstead Heath - me riding a bike, jumping up and down from trees and running across fields. We ended up in Rotten Row with me riding this white stallion, which actually ran away with me.

Didn't they try you out against Pat Macnee?

Yes, I did a screen test with a stand in and then I did a screen test with Pat - or Patrick, I've never called him Pat - before this thing with me running, jumping and standing still.

But almost as soon as you'd begun shooting on the series there was the problem with the production crew (including the producer John Bryce) being fired, as we understand it. Was all this going on above you?

I was involved in that I had been brought in by John Bryce, so I was "his" girl. Molly Parkin - the wonderful writer and fashion editor - and he were having an affair at the time and she helped John and me enormously with choosing clothes. They'd done so much for me and then they didn't want John anymore so I wanted to leave with John. I thought 'You leave with your Producer', and Molly and John said no and Patrick said "You can't do that". So when Brian [Clemens] and Albert [Fennell] came back I had not been their choice but they were stuck with me. I mean I had a contract and they'd shot stuff already and they'd spent so much on the announcement... whatever they'd done, that was it.

They seemed unsure of what to do with you at first, getting you to dye your hair and so on. But things improved?

Albert in particular really loved me and Brian got to like me more. The scripts changed so that I was less bubbly and stopped hitting people with a handbag and went more to being the stronger independent woman who did the judo and karate and the fights and actually wore some leather things. I had a very different relationship with Patrick and I wasn't the least bit like Diana so they needn't have been afraid of confusion as to whether they had someone who was too like Diana.

Did you bring a lot to the part in the early days?

I certainly winged it a lot in the beginning, because I had an idea that she was Miss Tara King; she had trained to be a spy and live with danger and that been partnered with Steed and immediately fallen in love with him, whether it was as a father figure or whatever...Certainly there was a difference in their ages, but Patrick



wasn't very different in age from anyone I was going out with at the time in real life, so I didn't think it was that much of a stretch of the imagination. The atmosphere changed a little bit in that Steed became quite protective of me while I would do anything to save him. So instead of doing things in tandem, we would often end up going off in different directions and then end up looking out for one another at the end of an episode.

But you had to work hard to prove yourself?

As I went on I got better at understanding what to do. I spent all the time on the set watching what was going on, trying to learn about cameras because I didn't know anything about them. Not being a Brit I wasn't completely clear on that slight send-up of the Establishment and the humour behind everything, the dry wit. Certainly I was unaware of any particular sexual innuendo, or any slight SGM thing about being tied up... people's little fantasies, but I began to under-

stand a little more about that. I had the sort of confidence that one has as a young person. I thought, 'Look, I worked bloody hard for this part, I'm gonna learn how to do it, give me a chance'. By the second year I was allowed to voice my opinions as to the way Tara was developing. We also got to improvise quite a lot and had a core of directors who would listen to us if we were uncomfortable with anything. I was also required to bring something of my own personality to the role.

Other than Clemens and Fennell, you had problems with various other bosses?

I was up against a lot from the front office saying "Wear this, don't wear that, you jump over the couch and your knickers show," and I should have told them all to piss off. In fact I didn't. Meanwhile I was being paid very little money. Patrick used to say if we'd done the series in America we'd have been multi-millionaires. At the time I was just amazingly happy, grateful and excited that I'd got this part.

Patrick Macnee was supportive wasn't he?

He was so sweet and wonderful. I loved working with him. I never really knew him in a bad mood. He really looked after me, came to meetings with me and guided me along. He was very funny, even very early in the morning - he was just a scream. I think he was bored to death at the time and could have given the whole thing up and I was his third girl, but he didn't treat me that way - he treated me as if I was a new, fresh, wonderful thing and he was very protective. I really valued his friendship and we've remained good friends. He's a fascinating man and there will never be another John Steed.

You got the feeling he was ready to leave?

Well, I think Patrick has said himself that a job started ought to be completed, and the series was still terribly popular but he must have been jolly tired. I only did it for two and a half years and it was hard and he'd already been doing it for years, starting with doing it live, so I think he'd probably had enough of it. He's a wonderful actor and he can do lots of other things. But he never betrayed the fact that he'd rather have been doing something else. Once he was committed to it he did it with enthusiasm; he was very involved in the scripts, and always looked perfect, and came to work ready to do the job.



CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE...

NEWS EXTRA!

THE X-FILE

DAVID & GILLIAN MISS OUT ON GOLDEN GLOBES

IT WAS THE SURPRISE AWARDING OF A GOLDEN GLOBE for Best Television Drama Series 12 months earlier which really launched what had been a growing "cult" phenomenon into the media mainstream, and in January the makers and stars of *THE X-FILES* descended on Los Angeles once again. However this year's Golden Globe show turned a chilly shoulder to last year's darlings.

The awards - bestowed by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association - have a history of unpredictability, if not outright capriciousness, and only in recent years have they begun to be regarded as a significant event, sending up smoke signals about the prospects for soon-to-be-announced Oscar contenders.

While major award winners from the movie categories were mostly expected or respectable choices, surprises were in store when the television trophies were handed out. This year *THE X-FILES* was not nominated as a series, even though David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson each were nominated as best actor and actress in a drama series. Instead another Fox Network series, the struggling *PARTY OF FIVE*, was a total



surprise winner in the drama series category.

David Duchovny turned out in one of his trademark non-fashion statement outfits and presented an award in what seemed to be a parody of Mulder's usual laconic delivery that was lost on the crowd. He then embarrassingly endured *NYPD BLUE*'s Dennis Franz totally botching his name when announcing the nominees for best actor, a faux pas compounded by Franz jubilantly presenting the Globe to his *NYPD BLUE* co-star, Jimmy Smits.

Gillian Anderson was dressed particularly elegantly and seemed composed sitting alongside her husband, Clyde, despite her professed nervousness at these sorts of public appearances. Perhaps she was counting herself lucky not to have been in *Teri Hatcher*'s shoes, as the *LOIS & CLARK* star was treated to idiotic sexist adlibs from actor Tom Arnold when they were strangely paired to present an award. However, the Globe for best actress went, surprisingly, to Jane Seymour for her role as Dr Quinn. Clearly, giving birth to twins while carrying on filming her series did something to warm the Medicine Woman to the press. ■

'PRESIDENT' CARTER ADDRESS!

PERHAPS IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO LAY TO REST SOME of the rumours that, up until now, have doggedly refused to die? CHRIS CARTER, who is in the best position to know, stated categorically at Creation's Burbank convention that:

- David Lynch is *not* going to direct an *X-FILES* episode

- There will be *no* *TWIN PEAKS*/*X-FILES* crossover episodes

- There will be *no* Agent Dale Cooper and/or transvestite agent reprise for David Duchovny

- There is *no* *NIGHTSTALKER* crossover episode in the works, although he has talked to the creator of that series who called to say how much he likes the show (but then Chris probably gets calls from lots of people in the business who like the show!).

On the other hand, Carter confirmed that science fiction writer William Gibson is working on a script for the series, and, impressed by the Clyde Bruckman episode this season, Harlan Ellison has also expressed an interest in writing an *X-File*, having turned down previous requests by Carter.

Carter was greeted with some scepticism about the merits of doing an *X-FILES* movie



from fans who, presumably, would prefer to see a never-ending string of first-run TV episodes, but Carter insisted he would not care to be involved were it just to make money. "There are a lot of things that the budget of a feature will allow me to do that I can't do otherwise," he said, citing both effects work and television censorship of his ability to scare us. So what *might* we be in for? Well, in answer to a question about the level of violence in the show, which specifically mentioned a scene showing a

severed head, he said, "I don't think of that as violence," adding that it is the *result* of violence which he has an interest in putting on the screen.

Other nuggets of information imparted by Carter:

- *X-FILES* video tapes will be available for sell in the US for the first time this Spring

- His favourite episodes include *Ice*, *Beyond the Sea* and *The Erlenmeyer Flask* from the first season; *Sleepless*, *Duane Barry*, and *Colony/End Game* from the second season; and he thinks that Darin Morgan has delivered two "terrific" third season shows with *Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose* and *War of the Coprophages*.

- He is working on another series for Fox which he expects will be ready for the Fall season, although he has no idea what evening it would be scheduled assuming it is picked up. Currently called *Millenium*, it is supposedly about the end of the world.

- Don't be surprised to see Melissa Scully - Dana's sister who was mistaken for the agent killed at the start of the season - return in one way or another

IS TAKE LA!

ANDERSON TAKES HER TURN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

THE GOLDEN GLOBES themselves were just part of a January blitz on LA by *The X-Files*. A huge X-Files convention staged by Creation a week earlier presented, for the first time, one of the principal stars of the series - GILLIAN ANDERSON - along with creator Chris Carter and other actors and crew. Since it seems unlikely that Duchovny will ever appear at a convention and Anderson told the *LA Times* that this would be her "one and only" convention appearance, it focused the maximum amount of attention on the diminutive red-head, who has usually remained somewhat in the shadow of her more glib co-star and official series sex symbol, as Kathleen Toth reports...

IT'S NOT EASY BEING A WOMAN IN A MAN'S BUSINESS, and were not talking American football here. Film and TV are dominated by the perception that the male roles are more important: male stars are routinely paid more money, and they are not considered to be on the verge of senility at the age of 40. Sure, things are a bit better on television than in the movies, perhaps, but mostly in the area of comedy shows where ➤

ES THE FANS

●Two CDs from Mark Snow are due momentarily; an X-FILES soundtrack and a disc of music inspired by the series

●Walter Skinner (Mitch Pileggi) will be appearing in episodes 13-17 as well as being the focus of an episode

●An X-Files CD game is being developed but will not be ready for about a year

●The average episode costs \$1.5 million to produce, even in thrifty Canada where the US dollar goes about a third further than in Los Angeles

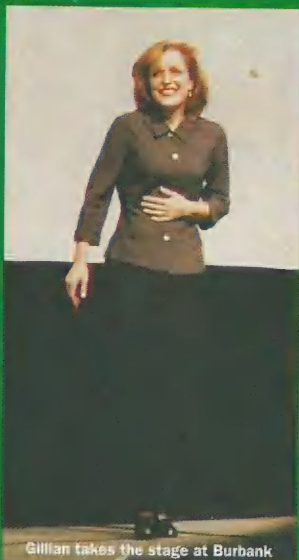
●What inspires the episode content? "We go on what our instincts are, and we drink a lot!"

●Best quote about Agent Scully: "I think that the truth is that Scully is a scientist and so she'll always run everything through the filter of her science. Even if she sees something she can't explain, she believes that science can explain it ultimately. I think she will keep the integrity of her character."

●Worst quote about Agent Scully: "There will be times when she's right in the future. But she's a woman, so she's more often wrong." [apparently said tongue-in-cheek!] ■



"NO ORDINARY WOMAN"



Gillian takes the stage at Burbank

PERHAPS MAKING it official that Gillian Anderson has arrived, the Fox Network has launched a new advertisement for THE X-FILES composed of clips featuring Scully in action as a voice in-tones: "This is no ordinary assignment. This is no ordinary

partner. But Dana Scully is no ordinary woman!" We invited net surfing X-Philes to tell us why Gillian Anderson lights up their Fridays(US)/Tuesdays(UK)...

Never suggest they might have looked for a more curvaceous partner for Mulder. Brian Cekoric: "Simply put, she's gorgeous in a wholesome way. BAYWATCH babes don't have a thing on her!"

Of course, BAYWATCH babes have little on, period. Andrea Moore Emmett: "She is an astoundingly beautiful woman who is one of the few actresses who hasn't succumbed to the 'female impersonator look' that is the plague of Hollywood women."

Adds Autumn Tysko: "The show would be missing a sense of realism if she had not been cast - because we can believe her as a real woman and not a plastic cut out." Tysko suggests that one cannot overlook that Scully can run in three-inch heels and eats ice cream right out of the carton "like a real woman," and is... psychic?

Mike French from Great Britain: "If Fox had cast a bimbo I wouldn't have even touched THE X-FILES, and now I run a fan club!"

Thanks to the worldwide CompuServe network, Steve West was able to chime in from New Zealand to add some antipodean input: "I have always seen X-FILES as having two stars; it is good that she is finally getting her due."

And what makes Dana Scully no ordinary woman? Perhaps the way she actually seems to enjoy autopsies? Wendy Wood: "She is a smart, strong, beautiful, feminine, equal partner in a working relationship with a man." Now how many of those have been around since vintage AVENGERS?

Chris Carter is to be congratulated for sticking by his casting choice and giving us, according to Degan Outridge: "A woman portrayed as a vital, three-dimensional character rather than an accessory for the leading man."

And if we have established that Dana Scully is no ordinary woman, what does that make Fox Mulder? We suggest Fox use the answer supplied by Marilyn Wilkerson: "Fox Mulder is no ordinary man. In fact, Fox Mulder is one weird mamma-jamma."

So there we have it. ■

there are some female producers and stars with significant power. But how many women have lead roles in TV dramas, especially in anything other than "ensemble" casts?

Jim Carrey has pushed salaries for the top male film stars to the staggering level of \$20 million per picture while the top female salaries reach \$10 million at the most. As the saying goes, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, and did it backwards and in high heels (and she had to go solo in a serious drama to win an Oscar because she couldn't get any attention otherwise)!

Gillian Anderson has appeared unflustered about being overshadowed for much of the past X-conscious 18 months by her co-star, David Duchovny. At times she even seems to appreciate the breathing space this has given her, confessing to the captivated Creation Entertainment Official X-FILES Convention audience in LA that she was very

She enjoys the break provided by the comedic episodes that have been arriving with some regularity since late in the second season - "It's great after working on these heavy duty serious episodes to once in a while have these wacked out episodes come along" - while hinting at a natural humour that appears to pervade the set when the cameras are not running: "It's not all dark and dreary - we goof around a lot so there's a lightheartedness."

Although Scully started out as a very straight-laced, coolly scientific antithesis to Mulder's Jack-Webb-on-acid, since then she has been abducted, been made the subject of several grotesque experiments, had a near death experience and, perhaps, a rekindling of religious faith. Indeed, it is a mainstay of commentary on THE X-FILES that Anderson herself is the "believer" while Duchovny is the sceptic, although she is of the opinion that both have been somewhat overstated: "I think that David

just has more reservations than I do. I've just always had a fascination with paranormal-like subjects."

If that comment does not jibe with your Scully perceptions, that is one problem Anderson knows she has to buck in getting other roles. She, too, is thinking about doing something with her summer vacation and was going to be looking at some possible projects while basking in the "Gillian's Turn" spotlight in Los Angeles - and she will be looking for something that will let people see that she can play a less contained and straight character.

She should have no problem imagining some alternatives. It's hard to



green about working in front of a camera when she started in THE X-FILES. "I didn't know what 'hitting the mark' was," she revealed. "I didn't watch television very much, I didn't know what a 'season' was - I didn't know they aired new shows for a while and then aired some old shows and then started airing new shows again!"

Anderson appreciates the fact that Scully is getting more opportunities in the third season: "In the beginning there were more times when Scully had to walk three places behind Mulder and stuff like that. That doesn't really happen that much anymore." She was especially pleased to get a chance to fight back in 2shy - "That was one of the first scenes when we actually see Scully beat somebody up" - but overall she's not complaining: "I think the character of Scully has made so many strides forward in the nature of women on television that it is hard to bring up any of those issues."

Not that she is focused on mayhem.

believe, but the woman behind the Scully rain coat went through an extended punk phase between the ages of 15 and 21, which, she explained, enabled her to express her feelings while imbuing her with a sense of self: "Even though it was a crutch, so to speak, I started to make opinions about how I wanted to dress, what I believed in, what kind of music I wanted to listen to." This was no flirtation with a safety pin in the ear, she continued: "I'm talking about mohawks, combat boots, swearing at people on the street..." Maybe Mulder should feel somewhat safer with her handling the combat duties following this revelation.

Gillian Anderson's star is surely on the ascent right now: she hit the cover of Entertainment Weekly in mid-February, presented a recent edition of AMERICA'S MOST WANTED and is imminently scheduled to guest with David Letterman. What further proof is needed? ■

DUCHOVNY

MOVES ON... AND ON...

DAVID DUCHOVNY IS WASTING NO MOMENT IN PARLAYING HIS X-FILES media profile into big screen opportunities. He is negotiating to make a *second* movie this year during his 10-12 week break from the rigorous series shooting schedule.

In addition to *PLAYING GOD* for Columbia, as reported in *DREAMWATCH* 17, Duchovny is considering *PERMANENT MIDNIGHT* at Warners - a story based on the life of TV writer Jerry Stahl as told in a book published last year in which Stahl charted the ups and downs of life in *lotusland* as he worked on series like *MOONLIGHTING* and *TWIN PEAKS* while binging on drugs.

Duchovny appears determined to have a body of other leading film roles firmly established before he appears on the big screen as Agent Mulder - a novel strategy to score what seems like a preemptive strike against typecasting!



Duchovny has come a long way since his dragged up days alongside Kyle McLachlan in *TWIN PEAKS*

He seems to be moving on in his personal life as well, as word is out that he has broken off his long term relationship with Los Angeles-based actress Perry Reeves - best known to X-FILES fans for her appearance in last season's 3. Not surprisingly, the difficulties of maintaining a viable relationship while separated by a gap of more than 1,000 miles for much of the time soon took its toll. ■



MORGAN MAKES IT A HATRICK

IN LESS THAN A YEAR DARIN Morgan has penned three scripts for *THE X-FILES*, all of which exhibit a decidedly unusual sense of humour. Although Mulder's trademark, deadpan quips were part of the show from the start and considerable elements of humour enlivened *The Host* and *Die Hand Die Verletzt*, Morgan constructs an episode as a complex farce from beginning to end, but with a different twist each time.

In *Humbug*, the playfulness comes from inverting the normal and the freak view of things. Clyde Bruckman's *Final Repose* gets unexpected pathos from showing us the most dramatic psychic ability - foreseeing death - as it might operate in the most mundane contexts. *War of the Coprophages*, by teaching us all a new word, spins out a lunny sci-fi fantasy about alien probes disguised as cockroaches creating panic in a small town.

It may be that the pendulum will swing if the number of "fun" episodes appears to intrude on the recurring core mythology of *THE X-FILES*, the hunt for the Truth



Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose © Fox

out there or the alien/human conspiracy, but for now Morgan is a Phile favourite. That he made his first appearance on the show as the giant liver parasite known as Flukeman (*The Host*) only endears him to fans.

According to Hilary Markowe, for example, Morgan performs the valuable social service of "giving nepotism a good name," and finds it "refreshing" that the show can still poke fun at itself despite newfound fame. *DREAMWATCH* panel member

Marilyn Wilkerson finds the Morgan episodes easily her favourites: "One of the main reasons I got into the show in the first place was Mulder's habit of wisecracking, and I think Morgan's episodes are a natural extension of that." Deborah Barrett enjoys laughing and screaming at the same time - "it makes for a great catharsis" - and Robin Walton thinks that it is nice, as seriously as we all take this show, to have a "very intelligent class clown show up in the middle."

Naturally there are those cautionary sceptics out there too.

Steven West fears that the point of these episodes is to, in a way, ridicule the show. Wendy Wood agrees that Morgan is a very talented writer, but adds, "I think the style he brings to *THE X-FILES* is best in small doses."

Since the cast, and Chris Carter in particular, love these episodes too, Morgan is going to be around for a while. Flukeman is set to return this season too - but it is unlikely that Mr Morgan can be expected to squirm back inside his slug suit. ■

LIFE'S A MITCH!

Carving an increasingly prominent niche for himself as FBI Assistant Director **Walter S Skinner** in **THE X-FILES**, **MITCH PILEGGI** recently took time off from his hectic schedule to talk to *Darren Rea* about his time on the hit series...

DREAMWATCH: AS I SPEAK WITH YOU IT'S OCTOBER and you're about to attend your first British convention. How do you think it may compare to the ones you attend in America?

Mitch Pileggi: This is my first convention over here but I've been to quite a few in the States. Over there the fans of the show are a lot of fun and they are extremely intelligent. They are very perceptive and pick up on a lot of things, little things, subtleties that make me think, 'Wow, these people are really watching'. The first convention I did I went in with so much apprehension, but once I got up on stage and

started talking - when I got my first laugh - I was off to the races! I'm looking forward to doing my first one over here. It'll be very interesting.

When you first appeared as Skinner in the season one episode *Tooms*, did you think it was a one-off part?

I think there was some mention of a possibility of it being recurring. *Tooms* was about two thirds of the way through the first season, after which I didn't appear again that season. Then they asked me if I'd come back for the beginning of the next season, and at that point I knew that it was going to be a pretty regular part.

How did you get into acting?

I think acting is in my blood. It's all I've ever wanted to do. The money is great, but if I was acting I don't know what I'd be doing now. I started acting late on in my life - I was actually twenty-seven when I started. I had done a lot of things up to that point, so I've had a lot of life experience unlike a lot of actors who have been acting since they could walk. I had done some acting in high school and college and really enjoyed it. It's not what I was majoring in at college, I was just doing it for the pure fun of it. I then went overseas working on defence contracts - I was in Iran when the revolution started. Then I came back to the States and joined a theatre group in Texas and that's where it all started.

Of all the episodes you've been involved with so far, which has been the most challenging for you as an actor?

All the episodes I've been in have all been a lot of fun. The first two episodes in the third season I featured fairly heavily and those are probably my favourite so far. I know they're talking about an episode soon which revolves around Skinner.

How much of a shelf life do you think *THE X-FILES* has?

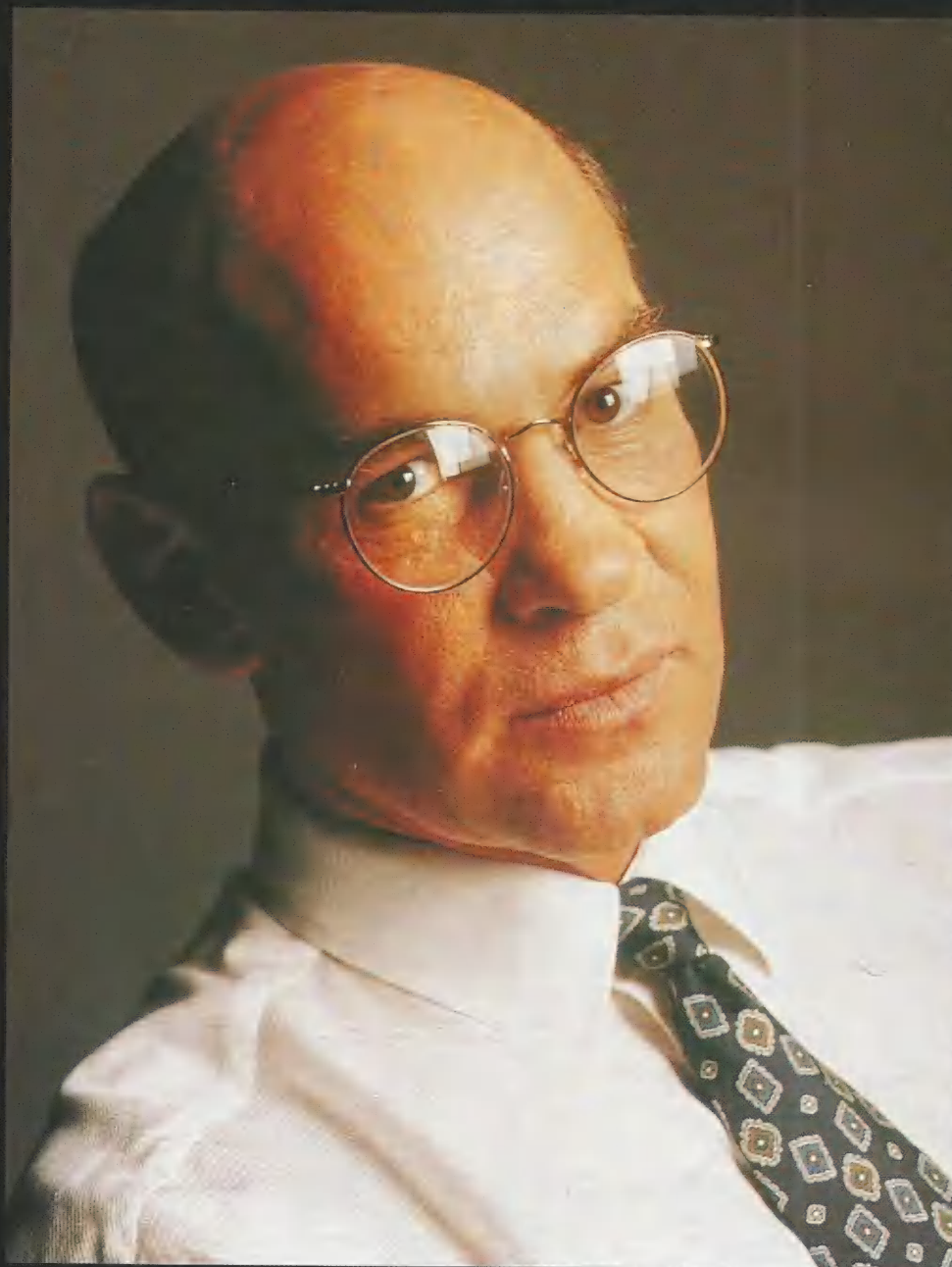
It's hard to say. TV is such a fickle thing that it's hard to predict what will be in fashion from year to year. I think it has a better chance of surviving than most other shows because it is so well done. Chris [Carter] is so involved with this, it's such a labour of love that the show consumes most of his energy. I think when it starts to wane, or when Chris tires of it, he will stop producing it. At the moment, thankfully, he still has a large amount of new and exciting ideas which should last us for quite some time to come.

Are you a believer in the existence of paranormal activity, UFOs, etc?

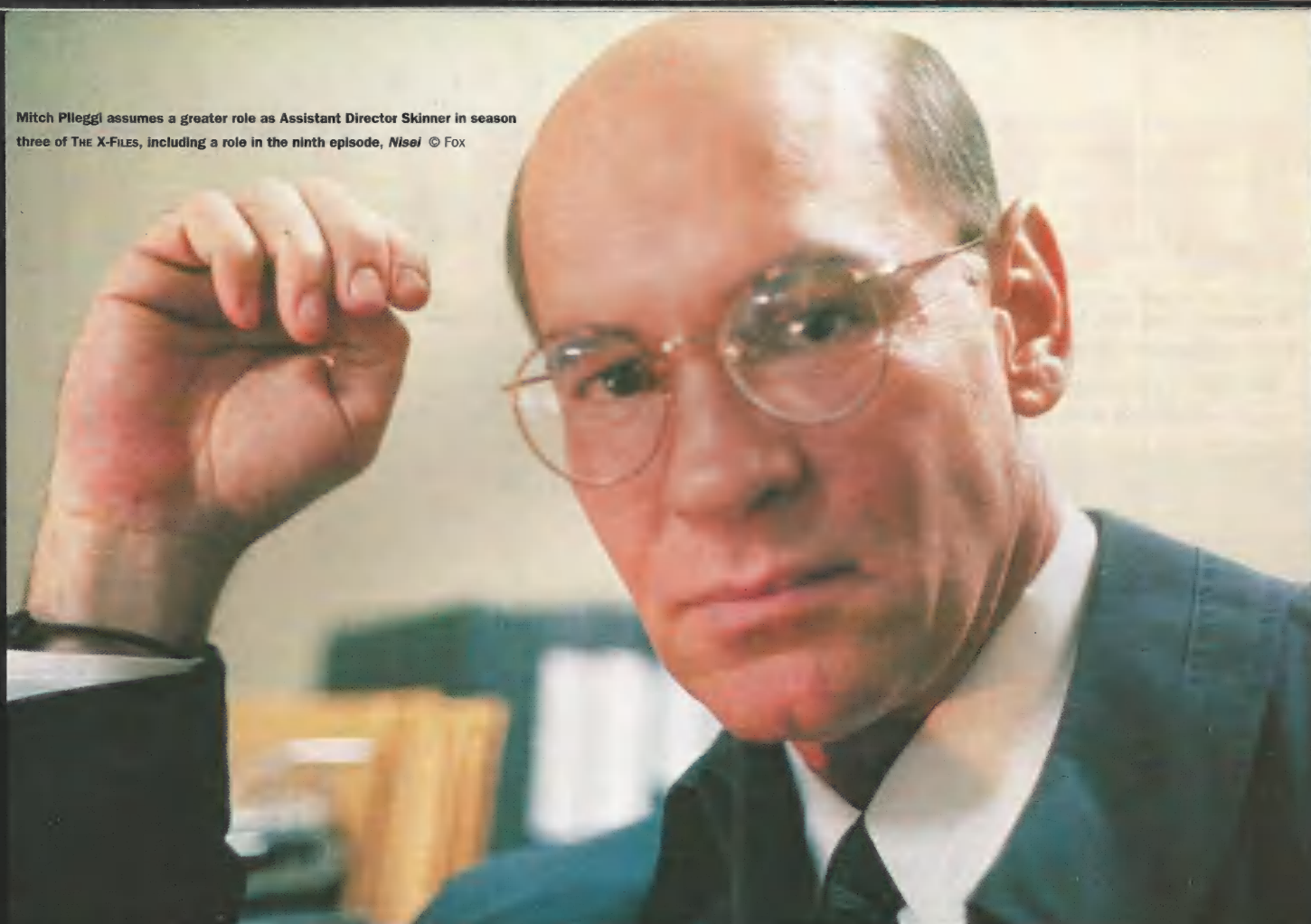
Yes. I haven't seen any UFOs or anything, but I do believe that there are other intelligent life-forms out there. I think it would be very arrogant of us to think that we were the only life-forms in existence.

As far as the paranormal, I've had something happen to me that made me really think and opened my eyes to other possibilities. I was at a school in Munich in the early Seventies and the dormitory that I was living in was an ex SS barracks. It was common knowledge that people had seen strange things around this area - they still do as a matter of fact. I got a fan letter from a girl recently who went to school at the same place and she had a run in with a spirit - she even had a name for it.

Anyway, this experience gave me a real jolt! One evening, just after I had found out that the place was supposedly haunted, we were drinking and I started laughing and mocking the supposed spirits of the dormitory. Later I went back to my room which had a large brass



Mitch Pileggi assumes a greater role as Assistant Director Skinner in season three of *THE X-FILES*, including a role in the ninth episode, *Nisei* © Fox



candelabra sitting right in the middle of my chest of drawers. I knelt down next to the chest of drawers to get something out of my wardrobe and all of a sudden I heard this scrapping sound and the candelabra came flying down and embedded itself in the wardrobe, just above my head. So I jumped up, apologised for mocking and I didn't have any problems after that. It was kind of weird because there was no way that it could have tipped up or fallen off on its own – it was thrown with force.

You mentioned you'd been drinking...?

(Laughs) No. I wasn't *that* drunk, but it did happen. It's not as if I'd bumped into the chest of drawers and knocked it over. I actually heard the scrapping sound of it pushing across the top of the chest of

Yes, it's pretty good. It looked pretty realistic. I don't know if it was real or not – I think it's possible either way. Most of the special effects people who were watching it say that whoever did this, if it isn't real, its pretty incredible work. I think it's very possible that it was real.

What have the creators of *THE X-FILES* got lined up for Skinner in the future, and what would you like to see him doing?

It's hard to say. I don't try and predict what they're going to do with the character in the future. At the moment I am very happy with what they've done with him so far and I know that they're developing him. Whatever Chris Carter decides to do with the character is fine with me because I think Chris is brilliant – he's got all my

I'll stay on *THE X-FILES* as long as they want me – as long as I can. Then hopefully I'll be involved in other TV projects or film projects. As long as I can work on stuff as good as this I'll be happy.

I know that there are already plans to write a book on the show, but I don't think that's something I'd be that interested in doing at the moment. I'd be interested in seeing how that turns out. If Chris is behind it it's bound to turn out great.

Do you get fed up with talking about *THE X-FILES* constantly?

No, I like talking about the show. I'm jet-lagged right now, so I'm a little spaced. A couple of weeks ago I did nine hours of interviews – it was taxing. In the end I wasn't even hearing the questions. I don't even know what I was saying half of the time!

"I just want to keep doing quality stuff, like working on shows like *THE X-FILES*. I'll stay on *THE X-FILES* as long as they want me – as long as I can."

drawers and embedding itself into my wardrobe. Thank God it wasn't my head! Not a good experience, but I think it was interesting. I think – and this is one of the things about the show – that people actually like to be scared. Part of that goes right back to when we were kids and were scared of the Bogeyman in the closet, what's under the bed and other things like that all get the blood flowing. It's human nature to be fascinated by this stuff. The media are obsessed by the trial of Rosemary West. It's human nature to be interested in what we find frightening. Look at history if you want more proof of that. Hopefully the other life forms I believe are out there are a little more rational than we are. Especially when you consider what we have done to each other and, in particular, to our world.

Have you seen the recent footage of the alien which is alleged to have crashed at Roswell?

confidence in the world. We don't know what's going to happen until we get the scripts. We don't all sit down and talk about how characters are going to evolve in future episodes because the show is primarily story driven. The story is the main thing and it's the characters that form themselves around the plotlines, not the other way around.

Chris is wide open to any conversation we may want to make with him about our characters – he's open to our suggestions on how we would like to see our parts develop – but at this point I don't find it necessary to. I don't think I've had any problems with anything they've written so far.

What would you like to do next careerwise?

Again, I don't like to predict what's going to happen because it's such a fickle business. I just want to keep acting. I just want to keep doing quality stuff, like working on shows like *THE X-FILES*.

How do you react to people who recognise you in the street?

Well, it's a lot easier to be nice to people than it is to be a jerk. I've seen jerks and I don't want to be like that! I have no problem signing autographs wherever I am. If you're eating dinner and you're in the middle of a fork full of food and somebody shoves a piece of paper in your face, or wants to shove a video camera in your face, it's a little different. You just have to say something like, 'Please let me finish eating and then I'll be happy to sign whatever, or talk to you.' But that sort of thing only happens a lot when I'm out with David. He handles it very well. When I'm with him he's so more recognizable than I am that they don't even see me. It's sort of fun for me, because I can just sit back and let him take the brunt of it and he really handles it well.

Mitch Pileggi, thank you very much.

DUE SOUTH

It seems that the long-standing urban hegemony of US TV is being eroded. **NORTHERN EXPOSURE** and **EERIE INDIANA** have widened horizons, while **THE X-FILES** has bucked convention by filming its US cities and forests in Canada.

DUE SOUTH goes one step further: although set in Chicago, it's a Canadian production, filmed in Toronto, shot through with the attitudes and ethos of that country. **Martin Day** strides forth in his jodphurs...



WHEN THE BBC TRANSMITTED THE 75-MINUTE pilot in May 1995, **DUE SOUTH** was watched by 9.32 million viewers. Here and in North America a fledgling fandom (fans are called DueSers, apparently) can be observed. But why is this of interest to **DREAMWATCH** readers? Simply because if any programme of recent years has been a borderline telefantasy production, it's **DUE SOUTH**. It could be described (if not particularly accurately) as **STARSKY AND HUTCH**'s keenly philosophical younger brother. Every episode is shot through with symbolism and allusion.

DUE SOUTH was created by THIRTY-SOMETHING writer Paul Haggis as a comedy of manners set within the more usual American cop show. The pilot episode has the morally upright young Mountie Benton Fraser (Paul Gross) tracking his father's killer from the snowy wildernesses of Canada to downtown Chicago. Fraser Jr has been blessed with a life-time of moral teaching and homilies on the

subject of politeness, but this seems of little value in the cynical and degenerate inner city. His unofficial partner in the US police, Italian American Ray Vecchio (David Marciano), provides the necessary street knowledge and scepticism. Completing the team is Constable Fraser's deaf, lip-reading wolf Diefenbecker, a palpable link with the life he has left behind.

The comedy (an early episode stars Leslie Nielsen) is broad and good-natured. *The Gift of the Wheelman* has a group of robbers dressed as Santa, and an order to arrest the Elves results in an Elvis impersonator being brought in. This lightness of touch balances, but never undermines, the serious content of many of the episodes, most notably the terrifying (and deadly) 'blue room' in the psychiatric institute in *Hawk and a Handsaw*.

The core humour derives from the clash of cultures. Fraser is just the over-polite, virtuous, pedantic Canadian all US citizens imagined lived north of the border, while Detective Vecchio is the Armani suit-wearing, slightly seedy, comfortably abrasive cop we might expect from any one of a number of US police shows. The universality of this conflict is a key part of **DUE SOUTH**'s appeal. We've had a bellyful of US cop shows over the years, so we know where Vecchio is coming from, and it's easy for the British to relate to Fraser.

We can see the cultural conflict most clearly in *Pizzas and Promises*. Fraser and Vecchio go under cover as used car salesmen, but Benton finds this extraordinarily difficult as he simply does not lie. On the other hand, in *The Man Who Knew Too Little*, Vecchio seems more concerned that his 1972 Buick Riviera remain in mint condition than successfully escorting a wanted man back to Canada.

This latter episode shows what a wonderful generic mix **DUE SOUTH** can be, moving from clever verbal comedy to anguished drama to an exciting and tense finale, which involves the destruction of Ray's car. There is often a message or a theme running through an episode that extends from Fraser's mental anthology of homespun philosophy, but it's handled with a tact and realism that ensures that **DUE SOUTH** has more in common with, say, the BBC's **HAMISH MACBETH** or (again) **NORTHERN EXPOSURE** than with **THE WALTONS**. Even the music - featuring such notable Canadian exports as the **Crash Test Dummies** - is as left-field as a public weaned on Springsteen and the Eagles will allow.

The philosophical vein that runs through the programme comes from Fraser's 'spirituality' and thoughtful openness. He has all the skills of an Inuit and the metaphysical acceptance of those who live close to nature. The 'spirit' of his dead father often appears to give him advice, as (less frequently, but even more incredibly) does Vecchio's. It's like Hamlet, but with better jokes.

In *Heaven and Earth* Vecchio is the unbeliever whereas Fraser unquestioningly accepts that a tramp can see psychic images of a kidnapped girl. With a plot similar to Stephen King's *The Dead Zone* and stylish, stark direction that would not be out of place in **THE X-FILES**, this episode unquestioningly accepts the supernatural and the surrealism of everyday life. Despite the presence of the Washington FBI, Vecchio and Fraser solve the case and rescue the girl simply because Benton trusts the tramp and his extraordinary visions.

DUE SOUTH's mixture of strangeness, humour and good drama makes it one of the most exciting programmes to come out of North America in quite a while. ■

● A series of **DUE SOUTH** videos are currently available on the **ClearVision** label, each comprising two episodes at £10.99.



DEEP SPACE NINE



Season Four Episode Guide

1 WAY OF THE WARRIOR (double-length episode) 01/10/95

WRITTEN BY IRA STEVEN BEHR & ROBERT HEWITT WOLFE
DIRECTED BY JAMES L CONWAY

PRINCIPAL CAST: ANDREW ROBINSON (GARAK), MARC ALAIMO (GUL DUKAT), PENNY JOHNSON (KASSIDY YATES), ROBERT O'REILLY (GOWRON), J G HERTZLER (MARTOK), WILLIAM DENNIS HUNT (HURAGA), CHRISTOPHER DARGA (KYBOK), OBI NDEFO (DREX), PATRICIA TALLMAN (WEAPONS OFFICER)
Sisko is called away to the command centre when a flotilla of Klingon ships appears without warning. Boarding the station, a General Martok tells Sisko and Kira that Gowron has sent him to support their Federation allies against the Dominion. There are rumours of civil uprisings on Cardassia since the defeat of the Obsidian Order, and even Garak is no longer sure of what is happening there.

Trouble flares when Klingons are openly hostile to Garak and Odo, and then attempt to search any ships leaving the station to check for changelings. Sisko decides they

need help and Lt Commander Worf arrives, but the Klingon confesses that since the destruction of the Enterprise he is no longer sure he belongs in a Starfleet uniform. Martok tells Worf that what they do is for the good of the Empire and he risks destroying them all if he interferes. Worf must decide where his loyalty is due – the Empire or Starfleet...

Kathleen Toth: *Worf seems to have lost what sense of humour he ever had, and is at his most stiff and glum. As is usual in TREK, not nearly as much has changed in the quadrant by the end of the episode as it appears would be the case, and the consequences will only develop slowly through the season. 7*

Priscilla Ball: *A decent action-adventure story which nicely set up the new Klingon/Federation relationship. The Cardassian situation was rather confusing but the show did what it was designed to do. 7*

John Hall: *The House of Berman shoehorns Worf into DS9 with as much grace as* >

ENTERING ITS FOURTH SEASON, DEEP SPACE NINE FELL UNDER THE FULL GLARE OF MEDIA SCRUTINY. THERE SEEMED TO BE A CONSENSUS emanating from the usually supportive opinions of *TV Guide* to the head offices at Paramount that the senior TREK series was not hitting the mark. While no benchmark has ever been publicly set for how well the first post-Roddenberry incarnation of "the franchise" has to do to keep the parent company happy, being first in syndicated programme ratings among one-hour dramas clearly hasn't been enough. Caught between the shadow of the ground-breaking, flashy success of *THE NEXT GENERATION* and the attention the studio has lavished on *STAR TREK VOYAGER*, the cast of DS9 frequently opines that they are like the overlooked middle child in a family where mere success is taken for granted, expecting to only be fully appreciated in the afterglow of the series.

In the here and now, DEEP SPACE NINE bartered for attention seeking headlines by bringing Michael Dorn into an already ample cast to reprise a popular character from *THE NEXT GENERATION*. Was the payoff more than headlines? Well, *TV Guide* recently gave a cheer to Dorn in its 1995 review, claiming he had returned "to help a faltering DEEP SPACE NINE cling on to life." It is certainly true that the first half of the fourth season has seen a considerable improvement in script quality and fan comment on the series, but all of this actually has very little to do with the presence of the glowering Klingon. Worf has actually been little used, and the plotlines that centre on him have, to date, been amongst the least compelling of the season. If his introduction has served any purpose, it seems to have energised some of the established characters and has admirably focused writing talents on more ambitious efforts.

In particular, Avery Brooks is getting the best material he has ever had to work with and is registering much more of a presence as Ben Sisko. Likewise, Terry Farrell has more opportunities as Dax, and even Julian Bashir has a new elan as everyone seems to be standing a little taller these days. Unfortunately, one of them is doing it while tittering on ridiculous three-inch heels. The major casualty of the DS9 rethink seems to be Major Kira, who has a "softer", more feminine look and spray-on uniform, as it seems to be decreed that she is now one hot babe and available since her Bajoran lover was dispatched last season. So far, another Bajoran, a Cardassian, and good old Odo all seem to be quite interested, which could create a traffic jam on the promenade. Speaking of Odo, he, more than anyone else, has been missing in action during the first half of the season. If that doesn't change, he should start thinking about jumping back into the Great Link with the Founders after all!

Edith Massey shimmying in a corset. I liked the book better. **7**

Edward Bonny: An instant classic that will go to the top of anyone's favourite action TREKS. Worf's presence actually seemed to detract from the overall energy of the story. **10**

Mary Taylor: There are good character moments for most of the cast. Sisko is now much more active and interesting but the excuse for the addition of Worf is less than compelling and the changes to Kira are sexist and displeasing. **7**

OVERALL RATING: 7

2 THE VISITOR 09/10/95

WRITTEN BY MICHAEL TAYLOR, DIRECTED BY DAVID LIVINGSTON
PRINCIPAL CAST: TONY TODD (ADULT JAKE), GALYN GORG (KORENA), RACHEL ROBINSON (MELANIE), ARON EISENBERG (Nog)

Jake Sisko is an elderly and reclusive man living alone in the backwaters of Louisiana when he gets an unexpected visitor one stormy evening. A young woman named Melanie claims to have been stranded by the weather, but it turns out she is an aspiring writer who has come in search of him. She became fascinated with Jake's work after reading the two books he published years ago, and she wants to know why he gave up writing when he was around 40 years old after such a brilliant start. Jake tells her it is a long story but, because she has arrived "today of all days," it is the right time for him to tell somebody what happened to him after he suffered the shock of losing his father at the age of 18...

KT: While Sisko's condition will have everyone screaming "Tholian", the complex flashback structure and a brilliant performance from Tony Todd as Jake in a future life on Earth lift this story out of any dependency on spatial/temporal doublespeak. It also plays to what has always been the strongest aspect of Avery Brook's performance - Sisko's love for his son. Todd, of course, usually appears in the guise of Worf's brother, Kurn. **10**

PB: TREK does some of it's finest work when focussing on character. It had me in tears by the end. Tony Todd was excellent as the older Jake. **10**

JH: Another "family" episode after a budget-busting season-opener - sound familiar? An episode better for its glimpses into the future more than anything else, but the emotional scenes seemed genuine rather than maudlin. **6**

EB: Without a doubt the most touching, heart-breaking and beautiful TREK ever, far surpassing City on the Edge of Forever and Inner Light. Cirroc Lofton's performance superbly captures Jake's terrible sorrow over losing his father. If only all TREK could be this good. **10**

MT: An episode destined to be remembered as one of the best of the best. A wonderful story of love and loss and personal sacrifice. The writing was outstanding and the acting phenomenal, especially Tony Todd. I liked the use of the first person story-telling device. **10**

OVERALL RATING: 10

3 HIPPOCRATIC OATH 16/10/95

TELEPLAY BY LISA KLINK, STORY BY NICOLAS COREA AND LISA KLINK, DIRECTED BY RENE AUBERJONIS
PRINCIPAL CAST: SCOTT MACDONALD (GORAN'AGAR), STEPHEN DAVIES (ARAK'TARAL), JERRY ROBERTS (MESO'CLAN), MARSHALL TEAGUE (TEMO'ZUMA)

Doctor Bashir and O'Brien are returning from a bio-survey in the Gamma Quadrant when they detect a plasma surge from a supposedly uninhabited planet. Taking the runabout to investigate they are hit by a plasma charge and ex-



ecute a hard landing on the surface. They are taken prisoner by a small group of the Dominion's Jem'Hadar warriors to a small encampment. Goran'Agar, a Jem'Hadar stranded here three years ago when his ship crashed, tells Bashir about the Jem'Hadar's dependency on a drug, they call White - a dependency engineered into their genetic structure by the Dominion to control the Jem'Hadar. When Goran was stranded on this planet his supply of White was depleted after 8 days, but he went 35 days without the drug and brought his men here expecting that whatever caused his "cure" will free them from the drug too. But nothing has happened and they only have a 5-day supply of White left, although Goran has told them there is enough White for 27 days. If he cannot discover how to break their addiction they will die in agony after killing him for betraying them. As a Federation doctor trained to feel sympathy, Bashir is expected to help Goran search for the secret of breaking the dependency on White...

KT: Bashir and O'Brien have slowly become unlikely chums but O'Brien chooses to disobey orders from Bashir as a superior officer. This story does make the Jem'Hadar more complex and interesting, however. Yet another BABYLON 5/TREK cross-casting pops up here with Marshall Teague, a notable Nam in that other universe. **7**

PB: The STAR TREK tradition continues: Starfleet doctors putting all thoughts of their own culture's survival aside in order to treat the enemy. However, the issue raised - what would be the consequences if the Jem'Hadar were set free

from their drug addiction? - is intriguing enough that it should be dealt with in a future story. **5**

JH: This episode tries to do for the Jem'Hadar what I, Borg did for everyone's favorite assimilators. Just say 'no' to the Jem'Hadar jonesing for "White" and concentrate on the clash between Odo and Worf back on the station. **5**

EB: The dark and dangerous conflict sprouting from the opposing views of Bashir and O'Brien is more than remarkable. The clash of Bashir's idealism and O'Brien's soldierly realism results in a disturbing, disheartening climax. A very nice take on the Jem'Hadar existence. **8**

MT: Interesting conflict between Bashir and O'Brien arising from their different personalities and world views. Later episodes, though, show no sign of the strain on their friendship or any other consequences resulting from O'Brien's near mutiny. **7**

OVERALL RATING: 6.5

4 INDISCRETION 23/10/95

TELEPLAY BY NICOLAS COREA, STORY BY TONI MARBERRY & JACK TREVINO, DIRECTED BY LEVAR BURTON
PRINCIPAL CAST: PENNY JOHNSON (KASSIDY YATES), MARC ALAIMO (GUL DUKAT), ROY BROCKSMITH (RAZKA)

An old friend from the Bajoran resistance sends word to Kira that he may have a clue to the whereabouts of the Ravanok - a Cardassian ship carrying Bajoran prisoners which went missing six years ago. Sisko agrees to let her take a runabout to the Badlands to see what Razka has found, but asks her to wait for the



new Cardassian government to send someone to accompany her. He wants to encourage the Bajorans and Cardassians to learn to cooperate but Kira is not pleased – especially when the Cardassian observer turns out to be her old enemy, Gul Dukat.

What Razka has is a piece of scrap metal which may be from the Ravanok and a star system where it was found. There is no reason why the Ravanok should have been in the Dozaria system, but Kira and Dukat find its wreckage on the hot, dusty surface along with a dozen graves, although there were 50 people on board the ship...

KT: Marc Alaimo is always effective as Dukat, although suggestions of an attraction between him and Kira are not very welcome. Nor is a low comedy scene which pops up jarringly in the middle of their grim journey. After vague mentions of the Breen in *THE NEXT GENERATION* they are finally seen – sort of. **6**

PB: Another step in the rehabilitation of Gul Dukat. The big bad Cardassian almost seems "human" these days. The Breen were a surprise addition; too bad we didn't get to see them. **5**

JH: I suppose the "sympathication" of Gul Dukat was inevitable, given the recent spate of "Cardassians are our friends" stories, but I prefer him as the Cardassian we love to hate. **8**

EB: The unlikely pairing of two blood enemies during a search mission drags this plodding episode into the realm of lackluster mediocrity, as does an artificial friendliness that blooms between Kira and Gul Dukat. Wholly unsatisfying *TREK*. **2**

MT: It was good seeing the old Major Kira again, but I found it hard to believe Dukat would have had a Bajoran lover and child. The subplot of Worf and Odo clashing on the station was distracting from the main story. **8**

OVERALL RATING: 6

5 REJOINED 30/10/95

TELEPLAY BY RONALD D MOORE & RENE ECHEVARRIA
STORY BY RENE ECHEVARRIA, DIRECTED BY AVERY BROOKS
SUSANNA THOMPSON (LENARA KAHN), TIM RYAN (BEJAL), JAMES NOAH (PREN), KENNETH MARSHALL (EDDINGTON)

Sisko feels compelled to warn Dax that a visiting Trill science team will be led by DrLenara Kahn, a joined Trill whose symbiont was married to Dax's symbiont when both were in previous hosts. Sisko suggests that Dax take some leave time, but she insists she can handle the situation.

Doctor Bashir explains the problem to Quark. "Reassociation" amounts to a taboo in Trill society: since the point of joining is for a symbiont to accumulate as many different experiences as possible, it is considered unnatural and wrong to reassociate with the life one had in a previous host. One must move on, even leaving behind children and friends. Only a few have ever broken this rule and they are exiled from the Trill home world, which is a sentence of death for the symbiont as there will be no new hosts...

KT: Yes, Dax and Lenara muster up a passionate kiss, which flooded the *TREK* computer forums with outraged postings for many weeks. Although the subject of homosexuality had

been nibbled at before in *The Host* and *The Outcast* on *TNG*, they provoked nothing like the impact of two attractive women lip-locking with a fervour in plain sight. I have yet to see a Trill story that I have really enjoyed. I don't think the culture has been well developed or makes much sense – with or without twee-baiting Trill thrills. **5**

PB: There seems to be no point to this episode other than to further confuse us about the host/symbiont relationship, and to allow the producers to claim they're being bold by showing two women kissing. **1**

JH: Terry Farrell and Susanna Thompson are outstanding, as is Avery Brooks' compassionate direction. The lengths everybody went to to explain that this WASN'T a lesbian relationship were, frankly, ridiculous. **9**

EB: The exploitation of Trill taboos and the dramatic tension created by their violation makes this a curiously intriguing show. As for the kiss, well, "much ado" **6**

MT: A wonderful episode that followed in the *TREK* tradition of using alien societies to explore issues and problems of our times. The controversial kiss followed naturally from the story. **9**

OVERALL RATING: 5

6 LITTLE GREEN MEN 06/11/95

TELEPLAY BY IRA STEVEN BEHR & ROBERT HEWITT WOLFE

STORY BY TONI MARBERRY & JACK TREVINO

DIRECTED BY JAMES L CONWAY

PRINCIPAL CAST: MEGAN GALLAGHER (NURSE GARLAND), CHARLES NAPIER (DENNING), MAX GRODENCHIK (ROM), ARON EISENBERG (NOG), CONOR O'FARRELL (CARLSON), JAMES G MACDONALD (WAINWRIGHT)

Nog has been accepted to Starfleet Academy and Uncle Quark is uncharacteristically generous in offering to give him a ride to Earth on board his new transport ship – a repayment of an old debt from his cousin Gayla. But Rom knows Quark is smuggling a load of kemasite in the cargo hold – an illegal and highly volatile substance – and while he and Nog are haggling over the price for their silence they discover that something is wrong with the warp drive. In a desperate maneuver, Rom tries to create an inversion wave by venting plasma into the kemasite.

Some time later they all wake up in Roswell, New Mexico. It is July, 1947, and they are under surveillance by the US Army, which thinks they are Martians. Quark thinks there must be real profit potential in dealing with these primitive humans once he realises they are even willing to buy a poison (tobacco), but Nog is anxious about his duty not to interfere in the timeline...

KT: *THE X-FILES* begets another imitation, but with tongue firmly in cheek. The time travel aspect is purely arbitrary, but affords an opportunity to spoof the conventions of 1950's horror movies. And, of course, much cringing from Rom and company when they are not tricking the girlfriend into giving them an ear rub. Utterly senseless but mildly entertaining. **6**

PB: A perfect parody of all those old alien invasion movies... this time from the alien's perspective. The problems with the universal translator were a good touch too. **8**

JH: So the premise is far-fetched to say the least, and naturally the female army officer and her open-minded scientist boyfriend are the only sympathetic hew-mons, but enjoyable, frothy stuff. **8**

EB: Quark's interactions with the US Army were hilarious and oh so appropriate for our slave to profit. A little heavy on the techno-babble, but another Ferengi comedy hit. **7**

MT: While I found this entertaining and >

amusing, I doubt it will hold up well on subsequent viewing. Putting *Star Trek* characters into the past has been done too many times for me to continue to be enthralled by it. **7**

OVERALL RATING: 6

7 STARSHIP DOWN 13/11/95

WRITTEN BY DAVID MACK & JOHN J ORDOVER

DIRECTED BY ALEXANDER SINGER

PRINCIPAL CAST: JAMES CROMWELL (HANOK), F J RIO (MUNIZ), JAY BAKER, (STEVENS), SARA MORNELL (CARSON)

The Defiant is hosting a secret meeting in the Gamma Quadrant between Quark and Minister Hanok of the Karemma. Sisko used the Ferengis to open trading relations with the local population in a bid to avoid Dominion hostility to the Federation, but now Hanok complains that the deal has been unprofitable – because of Quark. Sisko makes it clear that this is not normal Federation practice, but is cut off by the arrival of two Jem'Hadar ships who go after the Karemma vessel. Sisko is determined to protect the Karemma and plunges his ship into the turbulent atmosphere

of a gas giant in pursuit of the attackers...

KT: A parade of clichéd scenes leaves no surprises for the viewer and another grievance for Kira fans as Worf seems to displace her as second-in-command without any explanation. Cromwell is fresh from a starring role in the hit film *BABE*. **5**

PB: *DS9's Disaster*. Not a bad show, but I liked *Disaster* a whole lot more. The bit with Quark was quite good. **5**

JH: Not a bad episode, just not highly original. Worf and O'Brien clash nicely, Dax and Bashir acknowledge their flirtations, but Kira's blubbiness doesn't ring true. **5**

EB: A pointless plot paves the way for an incredibly monotonous episode.

Anyone getting tired of watching the *Defiant* get trashed in battle yet again? Not even the space combat special effects could save this one. **1**

MT: Worf is portrayed as totally clueless about command and has regressed some five or six years in judgement, patience and people skills compared to what he had become on *TNG*. Kira, on the other hand, has lost all sense of duty. **6**

OVERALL RATING: 4.5

8 THE SWORD OF KAHLESS 20/11/95

TELEPLAY BY HANS BEIMLER,

STORY BY RICHARD DANUS

DIRECTED BY LEVAR BURTON

PRINCIPAL CAST: JOHN COLICOS (KOR), RICK PASQUALONE (TORAL)

The old Klingon warrior Kor has come to see Dax, his blood brother. Dax insists on introducing Kor to Worf, but Worf fears he will not wish to meet someone whom most Klingons again consider an outcast. However, Kor says he is delighted to meet any enemy of Gowron, and tells Worf that he is on a quest which will surpass anything previously. Kor, full of bloodwine, rambles on about an object of incalculable value thought lost forever leading Worf to guess that Kor thinks he has found the Sword of Kahless – the personal weapon of the first warrior king.

Worf is excited about the idea of bringing such a prize back to the Emperor to unite the Klingon people; Kor is excited about the statues they will build to them in the Hall of Heroes; Dax thinks they should keep their voices down...

KT: A Klingon *Excalibur* sounds a lot more interesting than this turns out to be. Worf, the ever upright and dour, is not much fun and Kor has far too many speeches about blood and glory. About the only interesting nugget for the future is that the figurehead Emperor, a clone of Kahless, condemned the invasion of Cardassia. **6**

PB: A whole episode full of Klingon angst – with Dax as referee. They really need to do something new with the Klingon stories, which are getting boring and extremely predictable. **5**

JH: The show's two most underused characters, Worf and Dax, get to share an episode in this sequel to *Blood Oath*. Rousing epic. **8**

EB: What starts out with a bang ends with a pathetic whimper. A completely implausible ending ruins any potential this episode had, and makes all Klingons look like morons. **3**

MT: This might have been a fun romp for Klingon fans except for the serious character assassination of Worf. There is no honour in his actions once the sword is possessed. **5**

OVERALL RATING: 5.5



9 OUR MAN BASHIR 27/11/96

TELEPLAY BY RONALD D. MOORE, STORY BY ROBERT GILLAN
DIRECTED BY WINRICH KOLBE

PRINCIPAL CAST: MAX GRODENCHIK (ROM), KENNETH MARSHALL (EDDINGTON), ANDREW ROBINSON (GARAK)

Garak sneaks into Bashir's new holosuite program to see what could be preoccupying so much of his time. Bashir's recreation is a fantasy in which he is a dashing secret agent for Great Britain in 1964, but he is not at all pleased when Garak bursts in on his showdown with a thug named Falcon at an opulent gambling casino.

Outside the station, Sisko and most of his staff are returning from a conference but as they approach docking the warp drive begins to overload as all the safety mechanisms have been sabotaged. Led by Eddington, the staff in Ops tries to beam them all out at the last moment but their patterns fail to materialise on the pad once the ship explodes. The temporary storage of their data in the transporter buffer will quickly become unstable so Eddington orders the computer to save the patterns and their neural signatures in any available space, even if existing systems must be wiped to do it. In the holosuite, Bashir finds that his KGB contact and sometime lover, Col Anastasia, looks just like Major Kira...

KT: *Totally against expectations I enjoyed this senseless romp! The close proximity to the Quark at Roswell episode does seem to push humour too hard, but Sid looks grand in a tux, Nana could be a Bond girl and Avery is a fine megalomaniac.* **8**

PB: *A so-so holosuite episode. The only thing I couldn't figure out is why Bashir cared so much whether the character Sisko became destroyed the Earth or not.* **4**

JH: *Smashing homage/spoof, although Pierce Brosnan needn't fear losing his tuxedo. Am I the only one who thinks that Andrew Robinson and Nana Visitor would make a great John Steed and Emma Peel?* **7**

EB: *Fans of both 007 and TREK will no doubt get many chuckles out of this adventurous romp – if one ignores the fact that this is yet another in a long line of holodeck disasters.* **7**

MT: *A shameless and well done take on the BOND films. The holodeck tends to be overused in STAR TREK, but at least this time it saved the crew instead of placing them in danger.* **8**

OVERALL RATING: 7

10 HOMEFRONT part 1 of 2 01/01/96

WRITTEN BY IRA STEVEN BEHR & ROBERT HEWITT WOLFE
DIRECTED BY DAVID LIVINGSTON

PRINCIPAL CAST: ROBERT FOXWORTH (ADMIRAL LEYTON), SUSAN GIBNEY (COMMANDER BENTEN), HERSCHEL SPARBER (PRES JARESH-INYO), ARON EISENBERG (NOG), BROCK PETERS (JOSEPH SISCO)

The whole station is buzzing with speculation because the wormhole has been opening and closing at random for hours, with no traffic coming in or out to account for it. Bajorans wonder if it is a message from the Prophets, but Sisko is taken aback by a message from Starfleet. Two days ago 27 people were killed when a bomb exploded at a highlevel diplomatic conference between Federation and Romulan officials. Such a crime has not happened on Earth in 100 years. Close examination of a tape showing the meeting area just before the explosion reveals a decorative urn starting to change shape. Sisko had hoped the changelings would never reach Earth, but it seems they are already there. He and Odo are immediately called to Earth to consult on their knowledge of fighting the Dominion, and Sisko seizes the opportunity to visit his sick father...

KT: *The first story to really deal with the threat of the Dominion this season is diluted by being a two-parter. The script is padded out in both halves with long, repetitive speeches, in this half coming from Brock Peters as Sisko's cantankerous father, Joe. Odd that Leyton appears to be the only admiral at Starfleet Headquarters.* **7**

PB: *Some nice, homely touches with the Sisko clan, and the bits with Nog were good. I'm confused about the political structure on Earth, however. Why would the Federation leader also be leader of the planet?* **7**

JH: *Was it me or did this episode have more padding than an overstuffed down comforter? Still, Earth never looks so good as when it's in a TREK episode.* **7**

EB: *Lots in this episode for everyone. The grandfather-son-grandson scenes are priceless, placing the Siskos as the best family ever in the TREK universe. I enjoyed how the power relay sabotage and threat from the Dominion turned Earth into a paranoid armed camp.* **9**

MT: *We are finally seeing who Sisko is and what he believes in. While his appointment as head of Starfleet security seemed far-fetched, the story was well written and avoided heavy-handed preaching.* **8**

OVERALL RATING: 7.5

11 PARADISE LOST part 2 of 2 08/01/96

TELEPLAY BY IRA STEVEN BEHR & ROBERT HEWITT WOLFE
STORY BY RONALD D MOORE,
DIRECTED BY DAVID LIVINGSTON
PRINCIPAL CAST: AS ABOVE

Sabotage of the planetary power grid has prompted a planet-wide Starfleet alert against a possible changeling attack. It is feared that a cloaked war fleet may have come through the wormhole when it behaved oddly. There are Starfleet patrols in all cities and widescale blood testing begins. The sense of emergency is so widespread that even Joseph Sisko is now happy to be tested, although he had adamantly refused before...

KT: *The padding in this episode appears in endless scenes of Sisko and Leyton trying to win each other over and defend their own actions. Susan Gibney was Leah Brahms in THE NEXT GENERATION and a runner up for the job of Captain Janeway.* **7**

PB: *Another in the long TREK tradition of showing us problems in today's society by paralleling them in the*

future. In this case, they show us how easily we could give up some of our liberties due to fear.

JH: *Leyton as a misguided patriot is hardly original, although the corruption that infests not only Star Fleet but the Academy makes for good drama. Far too much talking and not enough action.* **4**


EB: *Quite a letdown after a great build up – you feel as though the Dominion should have been the real threat after all. Loved the Sisko/changeling chat but I am still confused about its significance.* **6**

MT: *Not as strong as the first part, this conclusion still has some surprises. I hadn't expected Starfleet to have created threats or actively engineered a military coup. Good Sisko moments again, although the debate between him and the Admiral went on too long.* **8**

OVERALL RATING: 6.5

TO BE CONTINUED...





The Shape of things to come...

When RENE AUBERJONIS was cast as a new kind of alien at the start of DEEP SPACE NINE, the producers knew that they were getting an actor's actor. Although Auberjonois was probably best known to television audiences for his six-year run as Clayton on BENSON, he is a character actor with extensive stage experience in addition to a plethora of film roles, beginning as the original Father Mulcahy in Robert Altman's M*A*S*H and extending to cameo appearances in STAR TREK VI and BATMAN FOREVER.

As Odo, he has played a shapeshifter who began with hardly a clue as to where he came from or any knowledge of the existence of others of his kind. Ironically, as Chief Constable of Deep Space Nine he now finds himself choosing to defend the "solids" who populate the Alpha Quadrant from his own people: the powerful Founders of the Dominion, the greatest power in the vast alien space that lies beyond the wormhole where Deep Space Nine stands on watch.

Kathleen Toth talked to him late last year as DEEP SPACE NINE's cast was just preparing to start filming *The Sword of Kahless...*

DREAMWATCH: Following last season's two Ferengi stories, you have just finished directing an episode for the fourth season [*Hippocratic Oath*].

Rene Auberjonois: Yes, this one is Dr Bashir and Chief O'Brien being captured by the Jem'Hadar. It's a darker sort of adventure than the other two stories have been. They are the first time I've directed one hour film for television. (I've directed half-hour video for television before; four-camera comedy stuff). STAR TREK is one of the few companies where, when actors get a chance to direct, it is more than just sort of going in and talking to the other actors and having the director of photography really doing the directing. They put you through a very stringent director-in-training course. You really have to earn your stripes before they give you a shot at it. I thought I would be crazy to pass up the chance to learn something as challenging as this. The concept of directing a one-hour STAR TREK episode that costs over a million dollars was something pretty scary to me, so I thought I'd better leap into the void and give it a shot!

Have you been satisfied with the results?

I've certainly been satisfied with the support that I get from the crew and Jonathan West, the director of photography. And the actors have delivered wonderful work. I can't honestly say I've been totally satisfied with my own work. It's been a learning experience in a sense for me, but I think that's the nature of my own work, even as an actor. I'm always less than satisfied with myself. Candidly, I can't say I feel like I'm there yet, but I certainly have no complaints about everyone else's work!

Are you going to direct some more this year?

Yes, I probably will. You just sort of wait for the assignment to come down but you never know what it's going to be. You usually get no more than a week to prepare, sometimes less, and the script can change substantially right up to when shooting starts, and even after, although that has not happened to me.

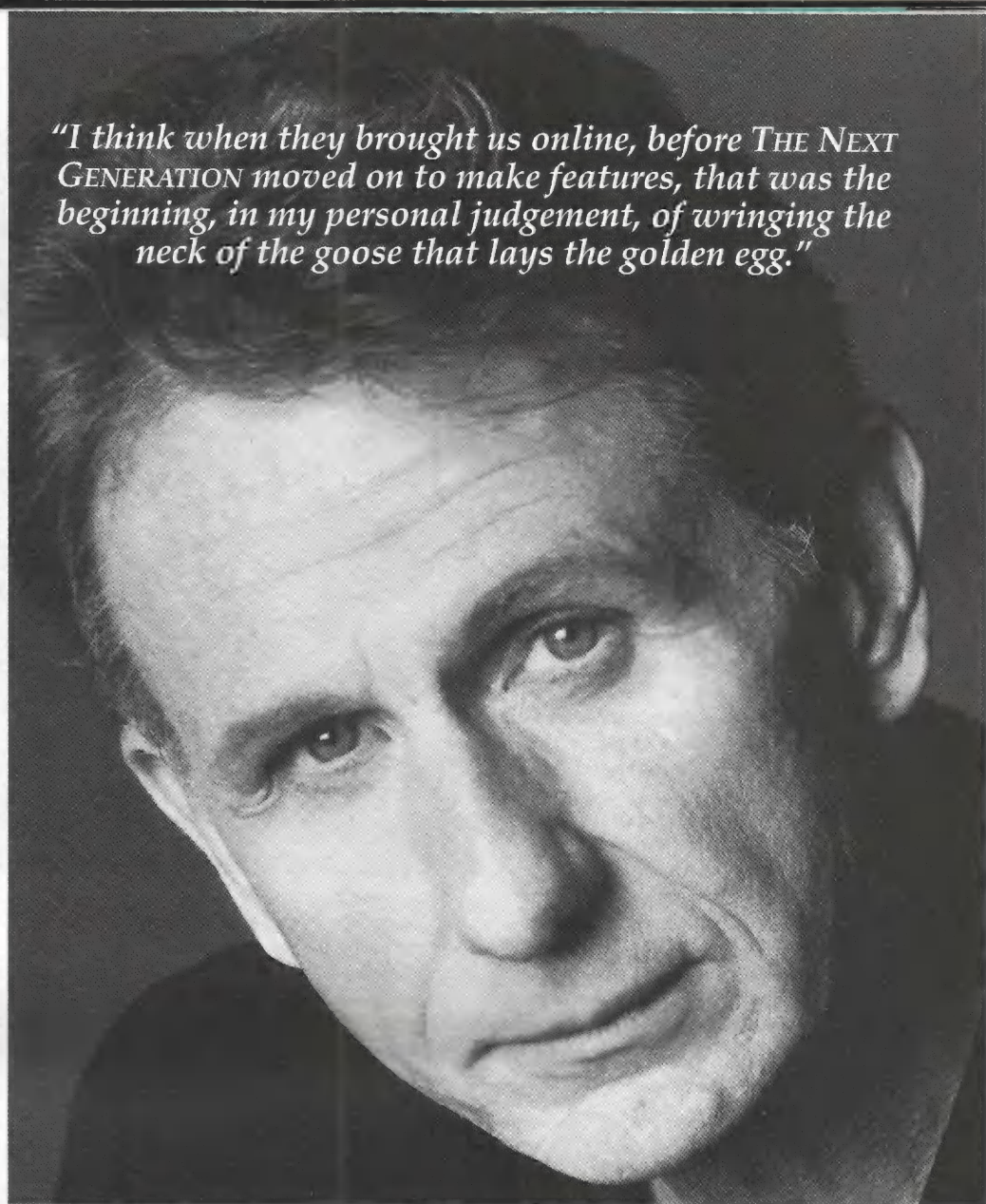
Do you compare notes with Avery Brooks, the only other DS9 cast member also directing?

Yes, we sort of commiserate and support each other because it's very stressful, especially when you are acting in the episode as well — it's exhausting! I can't speak for Avery, but I've been acting now for some 30-odd years and even though I am full of doubts about myself as an artist, I do know how to act. It's a craft that I have and that's not something that I question, but the directing is different. It's a new thing and scary.

Obviously, DEEP SPACE NINE is going through what looks like a fairly major change by adding Michael Dorn to the cast and a transition to what looks like a more action-oriented format. Did you have any concerns going into this season?

Actually, I was thrilled when they announced that Michael was joining the show. So far I've been proven, I think, right. I'm sure that on a pragmatic level Paramount are interested in strengthening the show and keeping the franchise going. The Klingons are very popular characters and Worf, in particular, is a very popular character within THE NEXT GENERATION, which is absolutely seminal — a powerhouse of a show. On that level, I think it's great — anything

"I think when they brought us online, before THE NEXT GENERATION moved on to make features, that was the beginning, in my personal judgement, of wringing the neck of the goose that lays the golden egg."



that keeps the show going is great — but more than that, it's the nature of Michael as an actor and a human being that he didn't come to the show with any agenda, no sense of coming to "save" us. He came with no attitude, he's a member of the company. He has just been doing his stuff the way the rest of us all do our stuff. It's also the case that getting into the fourth season of a show, anything you can do to shake things up, to energise the show, is a good thing. It's been particularly good for Avery's character, I think. It's given him an interesting focus. I don't think people will be disappointed.

You know, this is an ensemble show. I've had very little to do this season other than directing, but that's the way a show goes when it runs a long time. In the first season they focused on Odo a lot and I had some wonderful shows. The second season I had very little to do, a couple of shows that were good and other than that I was part of the ensemble doing my job. The third season was very heavy for Odo, finding the Founders and developing the relationship between Odo and Kira, and there was a lot of work for me to do. This season is much lighter for me. That's the nature of being in an ensemble. I guess I've been in this business too long — once the character has been established I don't really worry about whether I have enough stories that are focused on me. I try to stay focused on my work and I really do think of this as a team effort. Whatever it is necessary for me and my character to do to keep the team strong, I'll do.

One development I think people are particularly interested in is the relationship with Kira now that they have disposed of her lover and Lwaxana Troi has sort of disappeared as an option as far as Odo is concerned.

Well, you never know. Usually the Internet knows things before we do! So far, and certainly this season, that has not been touched on at all. I think Lwaxana is coming back this year, at least I heard that via the grapevine. I hope that will be the case. There hasn't been any focus on Kira and Odo so far. [*sic*]

Is that something you would be comfortable developing?

I am very comfortable with Odo's side of the relationship! I just don't ever imagine it developing into a full blown relationship with complexity of feelings, but, hey, I never thought we'd find out where I was from!

Odo started out being totally mysterious and now we know about the Founders and that they are a good deal more accomplished than he is when it comes to shapeshifting.

At first I was disturbed that that was all going to be revealed because I wondered where it was going to go from there. But again, it's not an easy answer. Just because we know where he's from now doesn't solve everything. The real problem for Odo now is he's torn between his need to >

be back with his people and his realisation that his real family is on Deep Space Nine. That conflict for me as an actor is very challenging and interesting and is ultimately more problematic than knowing where I am from. I have not seen any of the morphs that are being done so far this season, but I imagine there will be some refinement of Odo's skill as time goes on, although there hasn't been any real discussion about that. I actually don't watch many of the shows, which always shocks people. I am a stage actor and I am not very comfortable looking at myself.

Do you agree with the suggestion that DEEP SPACE NINE will only be appreciated in retrospect instead of here and now?

I said we were the middle child, and I think that is an appropriate way of describing where DEEP SPACE NINE is. The truth is, for better or for worse, not everybody is happy with that. DEEP SPACE NINE is not like any other STAR TREK. VOYAGER is like a lot of other STAR TREK. It is a return to the original formula, and more power to it. It's a wonderful show. DEEP SPACE NINE is a darker, more neurotic, not as pretty a picture of the future, and I think that it was developed while the riots were happening in Los Angeles. I think that sort of angst has coloured the kind of stories we tell and the kind of relationships we portray.

I don't know if we are underappreciated. That's a kind of judgement call. Maybe we are appreciated as much as we deserve to be. Again, on a very pragmatic level, Viacom bought Paramount, then started UPN, and VOYAGER is their flagship show. We still make money for them so we are important to them in that sense, but we are not their baby. We're just a STAR TREK.

I think when they brought us online, before THE NEXT GENERATION moved on to make features, that was the beginning, in my personal judgement, of wringing the neck of the goose that lays the golden egg. My feeling is that when you have that much STAR TREK out there, you have taken away the uniqueness of STAR TREK. I think that might be

greediness that motivates that. It has nothing to do with the quality of the work on either show. We are in a time now where the people who market these things have recognised that there is an audience out there for the kind of thing for which STAR TREK used to be – the only game in town. Now there are a lot of other very wonderful shows that are delivering that kind of a sci-fi fantasy to that audience out there that the TV power people suddenly recognise exists. I think we just have to continue our work the best we can and there will be a very specific audience that will recognise what we are doing.

My grandfather was a painter and my father is a writer, and I have always recognised the fact that artists just do their work the best they possibly can. You try to please your audience but not at the expense of your own

vision because then you have nothing left to give them worth receiving, so we just have to go ahead and do the best we can. I think on the whole, over the years, the episodes have just gotten stronger and stronger and the cast better and better, and that is the most I can hope for. I can't worry about the ratings numbers (I've never understood all that, even when I was on BENSON), and the syndicated lists are much more confusing. I hear people talk about those things but that's not my strong suit. On a very sort of simple level I don't even handle the money in our family – my wife does that. I'm just an actor!

Are you still doing a lot of voice work in addition to DEEP SPACE NINE?

Yes, I do that when I find time. CATS DON'T DANCE is the first cartoon feature being done for Turner. I am not sure when that's coming out. I just recorded a wonderful novel called MIND/MATTER and I continue to record novels. I have a recurring villainous character I voice on a Saturday morning cartoon show called SAVAGE DRAGON. I do that stuff as it comes along.

How did you end up doing the cameo as Dr Burton in BATMAN FOREVER?

Well, I met Joel Schumacher and he asked me if I'd like to do a cameo like that. I said sure, if they could find the time (it was in the middle of our shooting season). They worked the schedule out. It was really just a sort of a joke, in fact, it became even more of a cameo than it was originally. It was originally a scene at both the beginning and the end, then they cut the scene at the beginning for time reasons, just a week before it was released. I haven't actually seen the film but it was sort of an in-joke.

Everyone was impressed by the size of your credit, considering the size of the role. Yes, my son told me: "Dad, the credit was bigger than your role."

Thanks for taking time to talk to us. You're very welcome.



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AN AFTERNOON WITH WENDY PADBURY, Saturday 20th April - 11 a.m. Q. & A., autograph sessions, dealers, raffle - Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street - £6 door/advance watchers 97 New Bolsover Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 6PZ.

SKARASEN DOCTOR WHO CONVENTION Glasgow 30th & 31st March 1996. Doctors, companions, production crew,

exhibition, videos, dealers, auction and evening entertainment. SAE: SKARASEN, PO Box 85, Amersham, Bucks HP7 9QZ.

DOCTOR WHO: THE DÆMONS REVISITED 25th Anniversary reunion event, Aldbourne, Wiltshire, Saturday 27th April 1996. UNIT guests + exhibition, dealers, location tours. SAE: PO Box 85, Amersham, Bucks HP7 9QZ.

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REVIEWS

THIS ISSUE DEEP SPACE 9 [graphic novel/novel] 36/8; DOCTOR WHO [Missing and New Adventure novels/book] 36; THE X-FILES [video/talking book] 37; BABYLON 5 [video] 37; THE OUTER LIMITS [video] 37; THE AVENGERS [videos] 38; STAR TREK [novels/CD-Rom]

DEEP SPACE NINE

Dax's Comet

Boxtree, Out now, £8.99
(ISBN 0-7522-0134-4)



THE LATEST DS9 GRAPHIC NOVEL contains three issues of the original Malibu comic.

The first story, *At the Edge of the Final Frontier*, is a rather pathetic affair which has DS9's resident security officer Odo running amok around the station due to an allergic reaction to a vaccination shot. After twenty four pages of complete drivel the whole thing is finally wound up in the most unimaginative way possible, and with a corny gag thrown in for good measure. A clear-cut case of 'Odogoes-berserk-on-the-station-with-hilarious-consequences' script writing.

Dax's Comet brings the narrative originally started in the Cardassian vs. Klingon *Hearts and Minds* mini series to its natural conclusion. When it is discovered that a comet is on a collision course with the planet Bajor, chaos ensues on various levels as the Bajorans try to prevent the inevitable from happening. While a Bajoran's cult of religious Zealots waste time running around and shouting at Starfleet officers who are trying to help them, the comet closes.

No amount of planning could have possibly made this travesty into anything other than it is. A second rate script combined with a poorly scribbled layout of artwork is enough to make your head spin with frustration. Why bother reprinting something that is so bad in the first place?

Even die hard Star Trek fans will find this a bitter pill to swallow. **2**
Ray Thompson

DOCTOR WHO Missing Adventures

The English Way of Death

Gareth Roberts

Virgin Books, 21 March, £4.99 (ISBN 0-426-20466-2)



England, 1930. While Romana becomes concerned with indications of time pollution the Doctor tries to pass a pleasant afternoon in London. However, he cannot restrain his curiosity when an unprecedented earthquake strikes. Soon

they are embroiled in a plot involving illegal time travellers and animated corpses intent on devastating the world...

Roberts has returned to the era he portrayed so well in his previous Missing Adventure, *The Romance of Crime* – the underrated season 17. He portrays the Doctor perfectly as frivolously heedless of caution and convention but avoids making him merely a buffoon. You can practically hear Tom Baker's resonant tones pronouncing: "How very interesting. I can't say I've ever been attacked by a small before". Romana is also just as she should be – a level-headed yet charismatic personality who functions just as well as the focus of the narrative as the main protagonist. And K9 may be relied upon for a useful contribution when the two Time Lords let him get a word in edgewise. The image of the Doctor carrying his computer in a wicker pet basket (so as not to attract attention, of course!) is perfectly in tune with the era of producer Graham Williams.

As might be gathered, this is a largely humorous book with the emphasis on wry wit rather than high farce. The location of events allows for a comical portrayal of just about every cliché of English upper class pretension you can imagine. They're all here, from the bluff ex-army Colonel constantly recounting his experiences in India to the widow novelist who seeks to remarry because she misses having someone to complain to. The presence of visitors from out of time and space helps to illustrate the absurdities.

The villain of the piece is a gaseous entity, Zodaal, whose core possesses the twisted cadaver of a once proud gentleman. There are shades of *Ghost Light's* Josiah Smith as the reader is introduced to the pallid form, wreathed in the vapour which animates him, his house in a similar state of neglect and decay. Overall, the tone remains lighter than that macabre story, but there are some gruesome depictions of Zodaal's army of zombies who like nothing better than to feast on human brains. But there remains a distinct Williams era style to this menace, as evidenced by the villain's theatrical catchphrase, "Know the will of Zodaal!"

A thoroughly enjoyable, leisurely read, and one of the most accurate realisations of the Missing Adventures format to date. **8**
Richard McGinlay

DOCTOR WHO New Adventures

Sleepy Kate Orman

Virgin Books, 21 March, £4.99 (ISBN 0-426-20465-4)



The newly settled colony of Yemaya 4 is plagued by a strange disease, causing the development of psychic abilities. Fear and prejudice divides the population as increasing numbers become telepaths, psychokinetics or pyrokinetics. The Doctor

knows that only his intervention can prevent the colony's extinction...

This book comprises three distinct sections, following a gripping introductory chapter in which the Doctor experiences his own Jacob's Ladder, unable to distinguish nightmare from reality. The first part appears surprisingly simplistic for a New Adventure. A nonetheless intriguing tale unfolds as the Doctor and the colonists attempt to isolate the cause of their contagion. Issues raised will be familiar to viewers of *BABYLON 5* as telepaths face hostility from those afraid of an invasion of their private thoughts. A rich array of characters provide many perspectives including a deaf-mute who regards the development of telepathy not as a gift or opportunity to communicate, but a perversion of her true nature.

The arrival of the troops changes the nature of the tale dramatically. Their introduction is disturbing as seen through the callous eyes of their commander, Colonel White. For a while it is not clear if he is man, machine or monster. Orman presents a set of characters so ruthlessly impersonal that they only acknowledge each other by colour-coded pseudonyms. While these scenes are powerful, this section becomes clumsy as the Doctor sends Benny and Roz into the past in search of answers. Though ultimately essential to the story, this convenient use of the TARDIS is something of a cheat as a plot device in an otherwise finely crafted work. Cultural references abound, including *Snow White* (another computer is introduced, called GRUMPY) and *Sleeping Beauty*.

In the final section we finally get to discover to what the title, *Sleepy*, refers... but that would be telling. Suffice it to say the resolution does not become obvious until very late in the day. Many plot elements introduced earlier prove to be red herrings. It is dissatisfying that certain loose threads, many surrounding the mysterious temple, are not fully addressed by the novel's closure, almost as though the author simply forgot about them. One aspect that will be resolved (in Paul Cornell's forthcoming *Happy Endings*) is Bernice's burgeoning desire to settle down and raise a family. This novel provides a nice prelude.

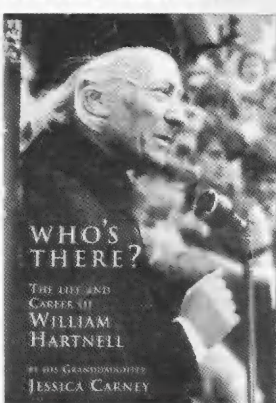
On the whole, despite some unevenness *Sleepy* makes compelling reading. **7.5**
Richard McGinlay

DOCTOR WHO: WHO'S THERE

The Life and Career of

William Hartnell Jessica Carney

Virgin Books, Out now, £15.99 (ISBN 1-85227-514-6)



Biographies are a funny old game. One person's hero is another's nobody, and it is hard to imagine anyone outside of Doctor

Who's fan following being interested in this book, and even for them it might come as something of a disappointment since Doctor Who forms only a small part of the text.

However, despite the lack of any really new revelations about Hartnell's time as the Doctor there are some interesting insights into the acting profession during his pre-television career. In fact, for students of British cinema, *Who's There* will probably be more interesting than it will be to Who fans, but only just. The trouble is that Hartnell spent his career as a jobbing character actor, on the whole playing solid supporting roles. The police, the military and the hard men of British films up until 1963 were his stamping ground and, despite all the protestations to the contrary, none of them were really very interesting in their own right.

But where the book really scores is when it tries to describe Hartnell the man, rather than Hartnell the actor. He comes across as a very mixed person – at times very generous, at times a thorough going cad. He drank to excess, gambled, cheated on his wife and was often difficult to work with. But he was also very supportive of his colleagues and this won him many friends.

Of course, the one thing that everyone will want to know is if Jessica Carney supports the conjecture that he was a racist. On the one hand she provides quotes that bear out this view while simultaneously attempting to rationalise them out of existence. Hartnell may well have liked Warris Hussein, who was Indian, but that doesn't mean he wasn't a racist. The trouble with bigotry is that it isn't logical and therefore can't be rationalised away in a few brief lines.

In the end the book is a well written one but Hartnell just isn't interesting enough a man to warrant 250 pages about his career. In fact, you get the feeling after finishing *Who's There* that he was probably not really a very nice person or a very versatile actor. However, he made the character of the Doctor a household name and for that we should surely be grateful. **7**
Anthony Clark

THE X-FILES 2 Tooms

Twentieth Century Fox (8920S), 25 March, £12.99



Comprising two episodes, *Squeeze* (the third episode in season one) and *Tooms* (aka *Squeeze* two, one of the last episodes from season one), this release sees the splicing together of the two episodes into a feature-length special.

When a business man is murdered and his liver removed by a killer who can contort his body to such an extent that he can enter his victims office via an air vent, the FBI are called in to fathom out what is going on. After three such similar killings an elongated fingerprint at the crime scene is matched to others found at similar murders, staggered at 30 year intervals and dating back to 1903. The chief suspect in the case is one Eugene Victor Tooms.

Finally Tooms is captured, but with insufficient evidence to convict him he is free once again to roam Baltimore in search of his final victim. Mulder and Scully know that if he completes his cycle it will be another 30 years before anyone will be able to have another attempt at bringing him to justice...

The editing together of the two episodes works incredibly well, and it is a wonder that it wasn't done previously. The suspense also builds more convincingly in this format than as two episodes viewed separately.

Anderson and Duchovny play second fiddle to Doug Hutchison's wonderfully sinister Tooms, who doesn't actually have to say or do a great deal. He just looks so much the part, and has perfected the 'manic stare look' down to a fine art.

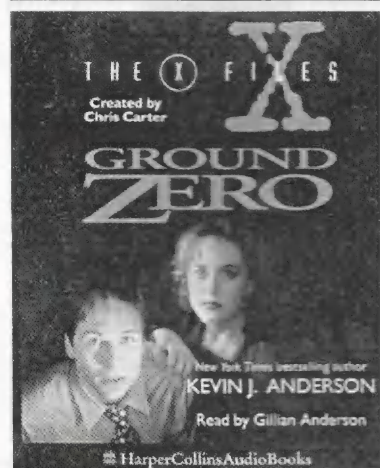
Strange how an episode from the beginning of season one has stood the test of time so well. While most science fiction shows have taken a while to establish themselves (STTNG, BABYLON 5...) it is evident that THE X-FILES started on a high and has managed, with relatively few exceptions, to maintain a high level of excellence.

Tooms is THE X-FILES at its most sinister, and a worthy addition to your collection. **9**

Darren Rea

X-FILES Ground Zero

Talking Book read by Gillian Anderson
HarperCollins, Out now, £7.99 (ISBN 0-00-104989-5)



"The X-Files is a true masterpiece. There's no more challenging series on television and, as a bonus, it's also brainy fun."

With an obviously well thought out critique like that, who in their right mind could possibly dislike THE X-FILES? However this quote - as well as the ones originally used on HarperCollins' book (which this reading is taken from) - are not

about the book series but about the television series. We all know how well received the show is, but so far the first two books have been less than favourably received by fans and critics alike, and the latest offering by Kevin Anderson didn't quite hit the mark - although he wasn't that far off.

Talking books are well renowned for their low production values - a very straight forward reading with no sound effects or atmospheric music - and *Ground Zero* is no exception. Here Gillian Anderson reads a three-hour abridged version of Kevin Anderson's work with as little effort as she can muster. A competent actress she may be, but a story teller she ain't. Ms Anderson sounds as though she is trying to stay awake for about a quarter of the reading, and for the rest she reads as though she would rather be off skiing in the Sahara desert.

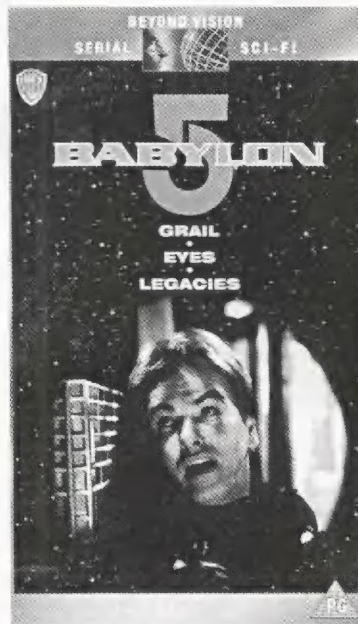
On the plus side, whoever went through Anderson's manuscript with a pair of scissors did a good job of cutting out the unnecessarily overlong sections of the novel, so what we actually end up with is a rather more entertaining bite size version of the original.

No doubt sad male X-Philes will pick up a copy so that they can fall asleep to the sultry tones of Ms Anderson (actually, now I come to think of it, it's not that sad an idea). **6**

Ray Thompson

BABYLON 5 Vol 8

Beyond Vision (S014289), 26 February, £14.99



For some reason Beyond Vision are offering a triple dose of B5 this time, but who's complaining?

Grail sees the arrival of a spiritual crusader in search of the Holy Cup of Christ. Meanwhile, a low-life called Jinxo faces the wrath of a crime boss but doesn't leave B5, fearing that he jinxed the previous four ill-fated stations...

This episode's big guest star is the reliable David Warner who does an exemplary turn as a man of faith who, it transpires in a brilliant scene, can look after himself in a fight. Credit is also due to the effects team for the thoroughly convincing brain-sucking nakaleen feeder - every bit as hideous as ALIEN's facehugger. **7**

In *Eyes*, the crew face a test of their loyalty to Earthforce when Colonel Benzane of Internal Affairs arrives with a Psi Corps telepath. Ivanova objects that she would rather resign than undergo a telepathic scan...

Here B5 does what it does best as Sinclair takes on the ugly face of officialdom and turns the regulations to his advantage. Michael O'Hare gets to do his best John Wayne impression as he responds to the Colonel's orders, "the Hell I will!" This is a good episode for Claudia Christian as Ivanova, who is tortured by the memory of how the Psi Corps eroded her mother's will to live. **8**

Legacies brings the threat of interstellar conflict when the body of a Minbari war hero is stolen whilst on B5. Meanwhile Ivanova and telepath Talia Winters clash over the fate of an orphan girl who has just developed psi-abilities...

Perhaps it is a bit too soon for another 'Ivanova hates the Psi Corps' story, but the main Minbari plot-line is engaging enough. Another Sinclair flashback gives us the opportunity to behold more exciting space battle footage. **7**

The cast and crew give their usual high standard of work in these episodes, although Michael O'Hare's repertoire is severely limited to the emotional states of aggrieved and annoyed. The best performances come consistently from Claudia Christian and Jerry Doyle as the no-nonsense Garibaldi. The main flaw with these first season offerings is the pacing, which is often let down by over-long epilogue sequences. Both *Grail* and *Legacies* are guilty of this, but there's still much to enjoy from this series which seems to improve the more you watch.

Richard McGinlay

THE OUTER LIMITS Vol 5

Beyond Vision (S035992),
Out now, £7.99



A BRACE OF SMALL BLACK ROCKS in a laboratory are not what they seem - they are alien life forms intent on taking over the Earth, and by using their powers they can control a human host, turning them into a walking zombie. However, Paul Cameron (Robert Culp) can "hear" the alien's conversations thanks to a metal plate in his skull, but no one will believe him when he tries to explain what he's heard...

The basic plot for *Corpus Earthling* is an alien invasion story by numbers. That said, despite its lack of originality it does possess a certain dramatic charge, mainly thanks to the central character played by Culp. He lends some very dodgy dialogue a certain amount of believability, but even his best efforts can't save the episode from the talking stones and their rather wobbly transformation into black squids. As ever, the directing and lighting help create an atmosphere of dark foreboding but even this fails to save the day. One for talking rock fans only. **3**

When the death of a surveillance officer occurs deep within a top secret military establishment a high level investigation is instigated. However, what the authorities don't know is that the death was caused by an alien that is using the surveillance device as a means of demoralisation. Its plan is to spread the Big Brother snooping equipment across the globe in order to sow the seeds of distrust that will eventually tear at the fabric of society...

Much of O.B.I.T. takes the form of a court room drama as the investigation onto the mystery death unfolds. The alien's means of ultimate conquest may seem a little weak when looking back at the episode, but while its events unfold the whole affair is quite tense and contains some nice touches of paranoia. Basically, it's a *Reds Under the Bed* parable but this easily transcends its politics, taking on the wider theme of freedom of expression and what happens when this is undermined. **7**

Anthony Clark

THE AVENGERS Vol 26

Lumiere (LUM 2318), Out now, £10.99



YOU KNOW IT'S GOING TO BE A BAD day when you're shot by a dead man. Worse still, the dead man's not on our side. Plans are afoot to use Tara to undermine British security without her knowing and when she succeeds (or appears to at least) it's to be curtains. Steed has 24 hours to prove her innocence or shoot her on sight...

More evil foreign plots to disrobe our island's sovereignty by closing down its computer defences of course leads to plenty of double crossing, a fist full of fights and the inevitable happy ending. Along the way we're treated to some stylish camera work, a script padded out with pleasingly inane humour and that ever-present AVENGERS class. However, by turning Tara into the prey, *Who Was That Man I Saw You With?* undermines the supposed invulnerability of the dashing avenging duo, so while the episode is very watchable you can't help feeling that it's somehow missed the point of the show. **7**

Would you trust two little old ladies armed with duelling pistols? Mother obviously does as he seems more than happy to tell them a story all about a spectacularly fraught case of espionage and death. Worse still, in order to catch the villains he has instructed Steed and Tara to infiltrate the gang of master criminals and help them steal every art treasure in the land, including the Crown Jewels...

Homicide and Old Lace is about as daft as THE AVENGERS ever got. The idea of Mother telling his two aged aunts a yarn spun out preposterously with embellishment is actually far better than the idea might at first seem, although a full 50 minutes of narrated clips does wear a little in the end. However, anything with such a splendidly British duo as Harriet and Georgina, Mother's aunts, can't be all bad. **7**

Anthony Clark

THE CATHY GALE AVENGERS Vol 4

Lumiere (LUM 2317), Out now, £10.99



Someone is smuggling in millions in rough stones so Steed sets himself up as a gems dealer and Cathy buys into some real estate while pretending to be his wife. Slowly, perhaps all too slowly, the plot unfolds...

Death on the Rocks is

one of those early AVENGERS episodes in which very little happens to very little effect. It sort of works as a character piece for Steed and Gale but the script contains too much lengthy exposition and not enough action to create anything much in the way of atmosphere or drama. The idea of using diamonds to undermine Britain's industrial military complex is a tired idea before it starts and the dull writing does nothing to lift it beyond the mundane. Hardly a good episode but not without the odd hint of period charm. One for hardened fans only. **4**

Information of a very delicate nature is being leaked from a Naval base. Steed is despatched as a military psychiatrist while Cathy gains employment in the command centre in an attempt to identify which of their potential suspects is the traitor. Closed ranks and a collection of red herrings muddy the waters...

Traitor in Zebra offers another twist on the corrupt military commander yarn – a theme that THE AVENGERS tapped into with an alarming regularity. However, this entry has little to commend it for many of the same reasons the other episode on this tape fails – too stagey by half and weighed down with a script that fails to sparkle. There are some nice touches of military badinage but on the whole *Traitor in Zebra* fails to rise to the occasion. **4**

A disappointing tape.
Anthony Clark

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE #14

The Long Night Dean Wesley Smith & Kristine Dathryn Rusch

Pocket Books, Out now, £4.50 (ISBN 0-671-55165-5)



Freeze-dried aliens make another appearance in this latest outing for the DEEP SPACE NINE crew...

Eight hundred years ago the Supreme Ruler of Jibet escaped a revolution by taking a sleeper ship (the Nibix) laden with

much of the planet's wealth, his family and 1000 of his loyal followers. The Supreme Ruler and his treasure passed into interstellar legend, until a smelly Caxtonian tries to sell Quark a statuette from the horde. Sisko and Dax (who conveniently have followed the story of their lives) quickly realise the implications that this discovery could have for the Jibetan Confederation, which is poised to enter the Federation...

The *Long Night* successfully captures the barely-suppressed senses of anticipation and excitement of a treasure hunt. By placing this story before season three's semi-cliffhanger, Smith and Rusch have dodged the redundant presence of Lt Cmdr Worf and delivered an engaging manuscript. The authors are quickly becoming veteran Trek writers who don't mishandle or misrepresent the characters, capture their dynamics and make unobtrusive use of continuity.

But as all manner of fortune-hunters and their ships begin converging on DS9 in search of the legendary Jibetan horde, the novel gets a bit top-heavy. Both Gul Dukat and Grand Nagus Zek seem wasted since they contribute little to the overall story. However, Kira fans will doubtless enjoy her success at keeping them at bay. As with *Station Rage*, one could question the presence of yet more undiscovered secret passageways on board the station, but if you're willing to overlook such quibbles, then *The Long Night* is quite enjoyable. **8**

John S Hall

STAR TREK: VOYAGER #6

The Murdered Sun Christine Golden

Pocket Books, Out now, £4.50 (ISBN 0-671-53783-0)



The presence of verteron particles (and possible wormhole) lead Voyager to the Veruna system, where they encounter several scientific mysteries. Why is a spatial concavity (almost a cross between a weak black hole and a

wormhole) drawing off hydrogen and stellar matter from the system's far-away sun? How can the sun, a relatively young celestial body, have become a much older red dwarf? And how much time will the reptilian inhabitants of Veruna Four have until their world burns out?

Since this is a VOYAGER novel odd spatial phenomena are obligatory, but they thankfully take a back seat to accurate characterisation of the regulars and strong guest characters; it seems like this book range is finally beginning to hit its stride. And the covers have finally become not so dependent on black, starry backgrounds.

It is hard to say whether Chakotay or Tom Paris get better treatment here. Golden seems to be the first Voyager author with a really good grasp on his Indian beliefs, which are put to good use as he learns from the Verunan leader, Viha Nata, that her people have remarkably similar traditions. Paris, meanwhile, puts his piloting skills to good use in training the Verunans, and proves that he can be a decent person when there aren't any shapely females in the area.

The *Murdered Sun*'s pacing suffers towards the end, where symptoms of the let's-stretch-this-out-just-a-little-longer-than-it-begins-to-set-in, but otherwise it is a fine read. The fact that the crew doesn't invent some new particle (or other form of technobabble) to solve their predicament is enough to warrant an **8**

John S Hall

STAR TREK Judgement Rites

Interplay (MNI-CD-20-0-0), Out now, Around £35

The disc based version of *Judgement Rites* has been around since early 1994. Now, Interplay have released a limited CD-ROM collectors edition. Unlike many recent CD releases this game package represents good value for money. The box, beautifully decorated in gold against a black background, holds two CDs, a video tape – containing *Errand of Mercy* and *The City on the Edge of Forever* – and a free Cloisonne pin, one of a set of eight.

As well as the games disc, *Judgement Rites* contains a 'Collectors Disc' which contains interactive interviews with both Gene Roddenberry and Leonard Nimoy; short biographies of the original cast; and a behind-the-scenes documentary hosted by Nimoy. What really makes this a must-have is the user interface. Each of the pieces is activated via a beautifully ray traced version of the original Enterprise's bridge, which allows you to walk around the bridge accessing the various stations (and thereby accessing the various interviews, etc.). The shame of it is that it looks so good that you just wish that they had done the whole ship. Well, maybe next time.

Judgement Rites requires a minimum of a 486 DX-25 with at least 4MB of RAM and a double speed CD. On a 486 DX-66 it zipped along with no apparent

hiccups or irritating waits. Stylistically, the game follows the original 25th Anniversary offering except in the cut scenes which, because of the greater capacity of the CD format, are less cartoony and more realistic.

Much like the 25th Anniversary version the game is split up into eight different chapters, with the player having to complete each chapter before progressing on to the next. Thankfully there is a save option, so if you remember to save at regular intervals you shouldn't need to repeat too much. The game allows for

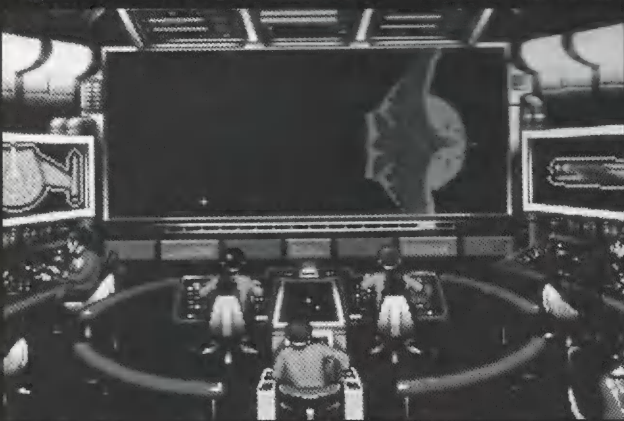
three levels of difficulty and is three-quarters role play with a bit of space combat thrown in. The difficulty levels tend to reflect the other ship's ability to blow you out of space. The puzzles are fairly straightforward and so progression through the game relies on you paying attention rather than having to try out numerous esoteric options to solve a problem.

The 240 hours of recorded material is an improvement over the 25th in both quality and delivery. As well as the regular cast, the game has another 28 actors helping to read the 13,000 lines of

dialogue. If the price tag or machine specification is still outside of your bracket you might want to buy the 25th Anniversary CD which is currently out on Virgin's White Label; it's only £12.99 and will run under a 386 SX with 2MB of RAM.

10

Charles Packer



GHOSTS FROM THE PAST

Following the success of 1993's DOCTOR WHO Radio 5 production of Barry Letts' *The Paradise of Death*, in 1994 producer PHIL CLARKE repeated the exercise with the same leading cast and crew members for *The Ghosts of N-Space*, currently nearing its climax on Radio 2. Paul Simpson spoke to him on 9 January about its production and the year-long delay that ensued...

DREAMWATCH: If *The Ghosts of N-Space* was recorded at the end of 1994, why has it taken so long to be broadcast?

Phil Clarke: The programme was made well over a year ago but since then has been sitting on the shelf. What happened was that when Spielberg got interested in DOCTOR WHO part of the deal was that the BBC did not undertake any DOCTOR WHO activity and therefore there could be no broadcast until the deal was sorted out or fell through. Suddenly we were told that the show could go ahead but the schedules were booked up for a whole year ahead, which is why it was scheduled to go out in March this year. Then just before Christmas Radio 2 decided to broadcast it in January.

Was it ready then?

As I say, it was all edited, save for the music which has been at the Radiophonic Workshop for a year. Funnily enough, it was going to be recorded in December but then Peter Howell was ill, and in fact he is writing the music for Episode 6 right now.

How do you feel about it being broadcast after all this time?

I think it's great that it's going out. We owe a debt to Radio 2 for repeating *Paradise of Death*, and they bought *N-Space* on the strength of that.

One criticism of *The Paradise of Death* was that it was a mixture of 1970's DOCTOR WHO and a 1990's feel.

I would disagree with that. 1990s science fiction on the radio is more JUDGE DREDD, KNIGHTFALL or SUPERMAN. If you were to produce DOCTOR WHO as a product of the 1990s you would need to completely rethink it — we live in a more cynical decade. *Paradise of Death* was particular to the 1970s DOCTOR WHO ethos — loads of running around, the middle episodes where they sit down and explain and then they run around again. I do take on board the fans' criticisms. One point was that the character of Jeremy was very unpopular. His character has matured more in *N-Space*, but I think he could be a little less naff and wimpy.

How did the character concept develop?

He was created by Barry. We needed someone when Sarah had gone off in her own subplot to talk to. That's why he's there. I hope, if we do more, he'll grow on you.



A publicity shot of Jon Pertwee for *The Ghosts of N-Space* © BBC Radio

Are there any plans for a third series?

It would be nice to do but we will have to wait for the ratings and for Radio 2 to commission us. I think that *Paradise of Death* was more accessible to the general public whereas *Ghosts* is more demanding and will appeal more to fans than the public. The final decision is down to Radio 2.

If you produced a third story would you stick with the third Doctor?

I am committed to working with Jon, Nick, Lis and Richard. If another producer took over he might want a new team or stick with Jon but I feel we have a good team and we have a good time in the studio. I would like to do a third adventure.

Although it was some time ago are there any anecdotes you can recall from *Ghosts*?

There's a scene with Jeremy and the gangster's mole played by Sandra Dickinson. They're

trapped on a boat with the engine gone and working out the effects for this can be difficult. What could we do? Colin, our Sound Engineer, came up with a brilliant idea — he got an old wooden wardrobe, cut it in half and placed it on a mattress. Sandra and Richard sat in the wardrobe with Richard's hand splashing water about in a bucket of water. It sounded just like a boat!

Barry Letts' novelisation was published as one of *Virgins' Missing Adventures* last year.

Yes, it was a shame the book came out early — the broadcast and the book should have come out at the same time. Virgin Books agreed to hold fire, but when the embargo on DOCTOR WHO was imposed it was unavoidable that the book came out. We couldn't ask Virgin to wait any longer. I was disappointed: it was written as a radio play and I think it should be heard first on radio.

***Paradise of Death* featured scenes not in the Radio broadcasts. Will this apply to *N-Space*?**

There will not be any addition to *N-Space* because of the time constraints. I am delivering the tapes to the cassette people very close to broadcast so there won't be time to add anything. However I think the advantage with cassettes is that most people listen to the radio broadcast in mono whereas the cassette is in stereo with the effects and the music recorded that way.

***The Ghosts of N-Space* wrapped some time ago. What have you been up to since?**

I am basically a comedy producer and have been responsible for a late night satirical programme called THE LATE EDITION, and coming up are four late night half-hour comedy programmes on Radio 4 called FAB TV which are based on RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED), THE AVENGERS and THE PRISONER. Also ahead is a series called EAMONN, OLDER BROTHER OF JESUS which I can envisage having LIFE OF BRIAN problems, more from THE MASTERTON INHERITANCE and a new show called WE KNOW EVERYTHING.

Producing DOCTOR WHO must have been quite a change then?

It's a nice change of pace for me. Lots of people thought that because it was a Light Entertainment production, it would be comedy, but we have treated it seriously.

Phil Clarke, thank you very much.



ITV, THURSDAYS, 4.45PM

REBOOT'S FIRST US AIRING WAS A SPECIAL Saturday morning preview on the ABC network in 1994, which garnered the highest ever ratings for the network's time slot. It was the first show to switch to full design and animation by computer, so it was only appropriate that the show itself is set within a PC in the breathtaking fantasy world of Mainframe. This metropolis is populated by the Sprites – bundles of electrical impulses that vary in shape, from humanoid to little numbers with legs; within the computer, they live just like human beings. However, although they exist in a different reality to you, it's the one show where you are the villain – and believe me, it's nothing like discovering that you did in Mr Black with the lead piping in the library. By playing games on the PC within which Mainframe exists, you, the Games Master, are jeopardising the lives of Mainframe's virtual heroes, the computer warrior Bob and his friends Enzo, Dot and Frisket, by causing for them the PC equivalent of a natural disaster! All they can do is 'reboot' into whatever Game you've trapped them in, and battle the space ships, tanks or monsters that you unleash on them.

As if that wasn't enough, Mainframe also boasts a cast of viral villains, lead by Megabyte, a power-hungry tyrant trying to take over Mainframe and gain access to the technologically superior Super Computer. However, his first attempt was thwarted by Bob, the Super Computer's gung-ho Guardian programme, who was shut out in Mainframe as a result, and decided to settle there to protect his new friends. Together, they battle Megabyte, the computer witch Hexadecimal, their pixelated predators Hack and Slash and, of course, you, the User, every time you load up.

When watching REBOOT you are struck, not just by the dazzling 3-D graphics, but by the originality and humour of the stories. While it has been pigeon-holed as a children's show over here, in America it is one of ABC's top rated programmes; the simple reason is that it has something for everybody. Computer buffs can laugh at the parodies of popular Games



and the groanworthy puns on computer speak; science fiction fans can enjoy the sly references to their favourite films and TV shows; and viewers of all ages can find characters with which to empathise. From the one-boy-and-his-dog team of Enzo and Frisket, to the budding romance between Bob and up and coming businesswoman Dot; all of them come across as 'real' people,

with their own personalities and quirks. If that wasn't enough, one of this series' episodes, *Trust No One*, is a crossover with that other science fantasy hit THE X-FILES: featuring the voice of Gillian Anderson and a character called 'Fax Modem' (not voiced by David Duchovny, unfortunately), this episode alone will hopefully heighten the show's popularity in Britain.

But the real story of REBOOT began back in the 1980s, when Steve Barron was asked to direct the (now famous) *Money For Nothing* video by Dire Straits using computer animation – with the characters they created also making a cameo appearance in a recent REBOOT episode! Barron teamed up with a group of Vancouver-based animators, Ian Pearson, Phil Mitchell and Gavin Blair, collectively known as 'The Hub', and the video stirred up a storm of interest. Barron went on to direct *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES*, still the most successful independently produced film ever, and *Coneheads* for Paramount. Joining him on both was British artist Brendan McCarthy, best known as a controversial and groundbreaking comic artist, with strips like *STRANGE DAYS*, *SKIN* and *ROGAN GOSH* to his credit.

With one successful career in hand – he worked for years on *2000AD* – Brendan turned his talents to design and storyboarding, his film credits also including *ENEMY MINE*, *HIGHLANDER II* and *DREAM DEMON*. In animation he had worked for a year with Hanna-Barbera in their Sydney studios as well as designing an Australian animated series, *THE NEW BABYLON*. He was later involved with Jim Henson's workshop, designing and storyboarding episodes of *THE STORYTELLER* (again with Barron) which went on to win an Emmy.

His connections with Barron established, McCarthy was the perfect choice for designer on REBOOT: "REBOOT was my first computer television series, but I also worked

As Disney's latest blockbuster TOY STORY gears up to make its mark, Computer Generated Image (CGI), not simply to add to the effects of computer animation had already made its debut when Children's ITV the series returned to ITV on 4 Jan

on the prototype of that computer animation style on the pop promo for *Let's Get Rocked*, the award winning MTV clip for Def Leppard," he says. "That was my first collaboration with Ian Pearson and The Hub crew. I designed and storyboarded the CGI sequences for that rock video and it gave me an idea of what the design possibilities were in terms of computer animation. Basically, there are very few limitations: I find the new developments in, and future prospects of, computer animation to be exciting; far more than traditional cel animation which, I feel, has had its day."

"Over the next ten years, animation will change radically. I have high hopes that the subject matter too will also change and improve. Manga animation will change over to CGI without a doubt."

In Hollywood, McCarthy teamed up again with Pearson to work on the design for *REBOOT*: "The guys at 'The Hub' are among the best on the planet. That meant I was able to push it as far as we could go, in the sense that I had to remember that *REBOOT* is a children's Saturday morning ABC networked show. Still, we certainly developed some really great characters and set-ups. The villains Megabyte and Hexadecimal were good to do. You can always go much further with the villains."

"Coming up with the design for a central hero, who is, if you like, the straight man to all the craziness around him was much more difficult. In the end, I hit on the idea of giving Bob chrome dreadlocks and blue skin. There seemed no good reason to make all the skin tones conform to any racial type. You'll notice that all the characters have their own colour scheme."

"I think my favourite character is the dog, Frisket, who, I think, will be ordained as the hippest animal in animation since *REN AND STIMPY* and *Mutley!*"

The change from comic strip and storyboarding to pure design - and designs that would work on computers at that - proved to be



something McCarthy fell to with a vengeance, and within only a few weeks he had sketched out the basis for the central characters and the main features in the cityscape.

"Initially I would prepare 'paper' designs, drawn on graph paper," he says. "These would be fully rotated character or object designs which would be circulated for everyone's approval. Things like blue skin and chrome locks, believe it or not, are sort of radical for kid's animated TV. Or were at the time."

"Once the art was approved and signed off, I would work with Ian Pearson on transferring the drawing onto the screen. He would usually build a wire frame of the character using my graph paper as a grid guide and then we would render up the character and texture and map any additional details. Once we had a good 3-D computer version of the character, I would literally

draw on the screen with a chinagraph pencil to push the character out here, tuck it in there. We would also radically play with colour and certain CGI special effects until we felt the character looked eye-poppingly great."

"Megabyte took quite a while to fully develop. We just kept adding muscles onto more muscles until we had a kind of 'Darth Vader on steroids'. Other characters worked straight away, like Hexadecimal and Hack and Slash. The more 'human' characters - the central cast of the show - took a long time to build, because you really do have to get the characters right. They have to have a real personality and not just appear as cold computer clones. The cityscape developed almost organically - if that's possible in a computer world - and the cars and trucks of Mainframe were fairly straightforward once we had worked out their rationale. As production designer of the show, I had to look at all aspects of the overall design."

As both comic strip artist and designer, McCarthy has an affinity for both - and hopes that he can combine the two some time in the future, developing elements of his whacked out collaboration with Pete Milligan from a couple of years ago - Rogan Gosh - as a CGI-animated series, under the snappier title 'Karmanaut'.

He sees a big future in the crossover from strips to games and vice-versa: "The brain of a good comic book creator is a huge untapped reservoir of intelligence and imagination... If you combine that with the skills of the animators at, say, 'The Hub', you've already got an astonishing line of talent and potential. I believe that this new technology will really put our imaginations to the test. That will be the fun of it. Exploring the imagination, and then actually pinning down those outlandish visions and dreams, making them move, talk, and live on through the power of this fantastic technology. Great things are happening! It's great to be in at the beginning of a new revolution in words and images - this time with computers." ■

You've been mainframed!

in the UK, more and more people are waking up to the potential of traditional cel animation, but replace it altogether. Yet before *TOY STORY*, aired the innovative US series *REBOOT* in January and February 1995; January with thirteen new episodes...

COMPUTERS TAKE THE MICKEY

● **ROAD WARRIOR**, the television spin-off of the *MAD MAX* TV series, has been put on hold following the announcement that the fourth instalment of the big screen version is due to enter production this year.

● **PIERCE BROSNAN**, who is celebrating *GOLDENEYE* passing the US\$300,000,000 mark, has been cast as a zany professor type in the spin-off movie based on the Fifties trading cards *Mars Attack*. Meanwhile, *Timothy Dalton* is rumoured to have been cast in the *AVENGERS* movie.

● **THE PRISONER** movie, which had reached the middle stage in its pre-production, has been put on indefinite hold.

● **THE JOHN CARPENTER** directed version of *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED* is going straight to rental on 1 March.

● **ITV** is apparently making a television sequel to the classic film 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, it was recently claimed but no further details are available at this stage.

● **TITAN** are launching a new *STAR WARS* Magazine in March. It will be published bi-monthly till September when it will go monthly. At 58 pages for £3 it will feature reprints of *Dark Horse* comic strips (the first being *Bobba Fett — Bounty on Bar-kooda*). There will also be up-to-the-minute news on the new *STAR WARS* films and star interviews.

● **PATRICK STEWART** claims that he does not believe that director Joel Schumacher had him in mind for Mr Freeze in *BATMAN TRIUMPHANT* - due to enter production in the autumn - until his name started appearing in rumoured reports in industry papers. Now he has been told that he is on the short list of people being considered for the role - alongside Hollywood giant Arnold Schwarzenegger! Uma Thurman has definitely been cast as Poison Ivy, however.



WALT DISNEY PICTURES

Release Date: 22 March Running Time: 80 mins Cert ???:

DEEP DOWN MOST ANIMATORS KNEW THAT THE GAME WAS UP, BUT THEY didn't expect the fatal blow to be delivered by the company most animators once viewed as the solid bastion of the painstaking craft of cell animation. Besides, didn't Disney learn a lesson from the commercial failure of *TRON* (1982)? How could the Magic Kingdom sell out to the computer chip?

The answer is simple: there was nothing to sell out to. Computer animation is the wave of today and Disney Pictures was desperate to board the train before it shot out of the station. As the first computer-animated feature film, *TOY STORY* is already a major milestone. Just as *SNOW WHITE* (1937) proved that adults would willingly sit through a 70-minute cartoon, *TOY STORY* demonstrates that computer-generated images are capable of sustaining a whole story. One of the major arguments against computer animation has always been the assumption that the silicon wizzards are more in love with their programs than with their characters. Undoubtedly, it is no coincidence that the plot of *TOY STORY* is a tweaking of that specific Hollywood notion.

The toys of *TOY STORY* present a mix of pride, arrogance, self-interest and enormous insecurities. They plot with each other and against each other. Though they are stamped "Made in Taiwan" they could appear on any soap opera.

At the top of the plastic heap is Woody, a cowboy puppet who reigns as the clear favourite of the toys' young master. Though Woody plays the role of enthusiastic cheerleader for the rest of the toybox, he is a benevolent dictator whose gracious manner is anchored to a lack of competition. That all changes when Buzz Lightyear arrives - a hi-tech space ranger who wows the old

gang with his muscles, his laser-equipped arm, and his nuclear-charged optimism. By comparison, Woody is a stiff old cowpoke headed for the last round-up. Of course, there is one slight problem. Buzz really thinks he is a space ranger. He has no concept of being a toy and behaves like a slightly deranged Trekkie. While waiting for space command to return his signals, Buzz convinces the other "life forms" in the toy box to help him repair his rubber spacecraft. Their greatest adversary is Sid, the psycho kid next door. His favourite pastime is finding new ways to maim and destroy every toy he can get his hands on. The toys' owner is a thoughtless brat, but he doesn't strap them to high explosives.

The supporting cast fall slightly flat, as do the songs peppered through the film by Randy Newman and Lyle Lovett, but the characters of Buzz and Woody are just strong enough to keep *TOY STORY* moving at an engaging pace.

What makes the story interesting for adults are the nightmarish ironies borrowed from the original *TWILIGHT ZONE*. In one scene, Buzz discovers a collection of "alien" toys living in a vending machine who think that the giant clack that plunks down and picks one of them for dispensing is a divine sign of being chosen for a special fate. Later on Buzz has to confront the artificial nature of his own existence when he accidentally sees his own TV commercial. This odd underpinning gives the movie an extra zest that is often more interesting than the simple tale of rivalry between two honest-to-god dummies. It also provides the film with a sense of disturbance that belies the situation comedy structure of the screenplay.

The surprising sense of irony is amply balanced by state-of-the-art visuals. Virtually every day marks the beginning of a new revolution in the micro-chip universe, where companies come and go with giddy speed, and explains why the director, John Lasseter, is viewed as an old pro at 38. Though the designer of numerous computer-animated TV ads, Lasseter is still best known for creating the stained glass knight in the 1985 production, *YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES*. Lasseter originally studied traditional animation as a Disney sponsored student, but one of the most unusual aspects of his work today is his concern with emotional expressiveness in computer-animation.

Although much of *TOY STORY* has the hyper-realistic sheen of computer art, it is also capable of demonstrating grain and textures of hand drawn images. It richly combines the 3-D abilities of computer graphics with a colour tonality and gradation previously within the exclusive preserve of traditional animation.

But more importantly, this is achieved without sacrificing human involvement. *TOY STORY* strives so hard for empathy that it occasionally turns sweaty from the effort, but it does score in the feelings zone to a degree not seen since Disney's own *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*. Which is the real reason why it has become such a hit. Like every other animated classic, *TOY STORY* is firmly based in a child-like sense of wonder. **9**

Dennis Toth



CLASSIC OF THE MONTH A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

This month Charles Packer dusts off his best bowler hat and takes a step into the near future where society has degenerated into a violent world of "haves" and "have nots"...

AN EYE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN SPORTING A FALSE EYELASH. THE CAMERA PULLS back to reveal Alex and his Droogs at the Korova, a strange, harshly lit club devoid of almost all colour, which uses plastic sculptures of naked women as furniture. The gang spill out into the night and chance upon an old tramp who, in despair at the modern world, begs to die. The gang dutifully beat him up. More carnage, rapes and murder ensue, leading to Alex's imprisonment where he is selected to undergo a form of aversion therapy to become the Clockwork Orange of the title. This leaves him unable to commit further acts of violence, and he is released into an unforgiving world where it is impossible for him to defend himself...

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE is in the unique position of being a film that was granted a certificate by the censor but subsequently banned from the UK by its own director. Unless you have access to one of the many poor quality pirate versions, your chances of seeing the film in the UK are zero, allowing it to achieve a notoriety and cult status that would otherwise have been unlikely.

Adapted from a novel by Anthony Burgess, Kubrick completed shooting the film in about six weeks in 1971. Its main feature was the onomatopoeic pseudo-cockney - Nadsat - that Burgess had created for his young (all aged around 15 in the book) protagonists. Burgess didn't feel that the film would be able to capture the flavour of this slang-language, but he was wrong. Because the prose was spoken rather than read, it allowed the actors to imbue it with light and colour, shades which were impossible to convey on the printed page. A real attempt was made in both the book and the film to move away from the twin evils of science-fiction-speak - languages which sound good but are meaningless (STAR WARS for example) - and the sort of technobabble which peppers so much of STAR TREK.

Strangely enough, although the film depicts Alex as an anti-hero, it fails to emphasise the severity of his crimes. The film

contains a number of what should be horrific attacks, rapes and attempted rape; acts of arbitrary and meaningless violence; culminating in the murder of a woman bludgeoned to death with a giant phallus. The problem that most of the contemporary reviewers had was not the content of the crimes but the way in which they were depicted. Many, if not all, are set to music and have a quality not unlike dance. The movements, whilst not in time with the rhythm of the music, are none-the-less choreographed. This may make for a visually interesting montage, but the ethics of such a presentation have been attacked by many commentators.

The violence tended to overshadow the film's central theme exploring the nature of freedom of choice. Like Burgess, Kubrick was interested in the ideas relating to free will. Alex, when deprived by the therapy of his ability to choose between

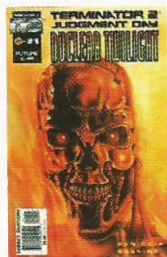


right and wrong, instantly turns out to be not the perfect citizen but the perfect victim. Both film maker and novelist seemed to feel that by removing his freedom of choice, society's assault on Alex was by degrees more horrific than his assaults upon his fellow man. "Only the right to choose conveys responsibility" is an old nut to crack. For 2000 years Christians have held that God gave man free will and therefore he can be judged by his actions. Unfortunately, the film's notoriety for violence has tended to overshadow this theme.

In truth the violence is mild by today's standards and this is its greatest failing. The violence is cold, failing to titillate or repulse. It doesn't have the heart pounding excitement of a film like ROLLERBALL or the bucket filling qualities of lesser B movies, but it is made by a master of his craft who is always visually interesting. ■

TERMINATOR 2

Malibu Comics, Import only, £2.



Fans of the old "Chrome Dome" will be pleased to learn that Malibu Comics have released two, four-part, mini-series based on the TERMINATOR films.

The first, *Cybernetic Dawn*, follows on from the end of T2 and details the further struggles between

Sarah Connor and her son John to stop the creation of Skynet. The second, *Nuclear Dawn*, zips forward to 2029 where John, now a grown man, leads the resistance in their fight for humanity's survival.

If you're wondering how they get around the ending in T2, then obviously, like me, you weren't paying attention. True, Arnie destroyed the other terminator, and true, he made the ultimate sacrifice, but it is also true that the idiot left his own arm behind!

The artwork is good with lots of dark, moody panels, and at the end of the mini-series the two comics will combine into one for the final, almighty, conclusion... 8 Charles Packer

BATMAN FOREVER

Warner Home Video (S013666), Out now, £12.99



It's plotless, point-less and badly directed. In fact, trying to outline the film's basic storyline would be a task to challenge even the most able film critic. But in one sentence it would have to read as follows: Two Face and The Riddler set out to kill Batman who has gained a partner, Robin, thanks to one of the evil duo's failed pranks. That's it. Everything else is set pieces and explosions fuelled by a massive consumption of amphetamines.

The dialogue is forgettable, Jim Carrey's Riddler is unsubtle, Nicole Kidman might as well have been a plastic inflatable, and as for the supposedly homo-erotic subtext between Batman and Robin! You'd have to want to spot it very badly to find anything to support the accusation.

However, BATMAN FOREVER did awesome business at the box office, which only proves that you can sell pretty much anything if you market it in the right way. 2 Anthony Clark

JOHNNY MNEMONIC Johnny Bisson

Voyager, Out now, £4.99 (ISBN 0-00-648046-2)



The original William Gibson screenplay for JOHNNY MNEMONIC embodied a good idea. Implant a data chip in a person's brain so that they can smuggle information - in this case 320 gigabytes of stolen secrets which the owners want back.

In the end the film was "not very good" despite it having some bankable contributors who should have been able to deliver the goods. (author William Gibson and actors Keanu Reeves and Dolph Lundgren to name just three).

And the book is little better. Terry Bisson seems to believe that his readership won't like sentences longer than five words or words longer than two syllables. This makes for a juddering read that does nothing to add to the original film version which finally leaves you wondering why it was ever written in the first place.

A poorly written book of a poorly constructed film. Avoid at all cost. 2 Anthony Clark

WIN!

IT'S FREE-FOR-ALL TIME AGAIN AT DREAMWATCH THIS MONTH WITH THE FOLLOWING PRIZES UP FOR GRABS:

- 1 Five copies of the next X-Files tape - Tooms - courtesy of Fox...
- 2 Five copies of HarperCollins' talking book version of *Ground Zero*, as narrated by Gillian Anderson...
- 3 Five copies of 1995's highest-grossing movie, *Batman Forever*, supplied by Warner Home Video...
- 4 And three copies of each of this month's *New and Missing Doctor Who Adventures* from Virgin.

All you have to do is write the number of your competition entry on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope together with your name and address. One postcard per entry only. Bulk entries submitted under one cover will be disqualified. Entries in by 8 March to:

DW19 Competitions,
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Tooting Bec,
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Star Trek Trivia

Steve Pinter, West Midlands
Paul Simpson, Eastbourne
Miss Dunne, Croydon
Miss J Robertson, Scotland
Mark Pilkington, Cornwall
Paula Rayment, Maidstone
G Davidson, Deptford
Lesley Davis, West Midlands
A Croft, East Sussex
M A Turner, Herts

Star Wars Scripts

Answer = 2
Robert Lawrence, Nottingham
Sarah Pestell, Norfolk
M Bhail, Middlesex
Steve Turner, Surrey
Paul Smith, Herts

Raiders of the Lost Ark CD
Answer = Tom Selleck
Bob G Morgan

Star Wars Remastered video sets

Jonathan Chan-Pensley, Essex
P Marter, Norfolk
J K Letterson, Nottingham
Stephan Cowley, Brighton
Derek Hindley, South London

Monster of Peladon videos

Answer = 5
Phillip Lodge, Glous
Mr A Shields, Hull
J Rodgers, Cornwall
J Beard, Herts
S Heppenstill, Blackpool

MARCUS BERKMANN

The *Sunday Express* television critic writes for DREAMWATCH...

I am not a film script...

Interesting to read all the various dissertations on

THE PRISONER in recent issues of DREAMWATCH, and even more interesting to learn that Polygram are preparing a big screen version, with your man McGoohan directly involved. So are you holding your breath? Me neither. We all know what will happen. The script won't work, or the wrong star will be chosen, or McGoohan will go barmy at some vital stage in the proceedings, and the whole project will fall to pieces. If by some miracle the film does get made, it will be a gutless travesty of the original, shorn of the multi-layered oddness of the original because American teenagers don't dig multi-layered oddness and hey, let's get Pearl Jam to do the soundtrack. Well, no, it probably won't be quite as bad as that, but it's best to be prepared.

Needless to say, this resuscitation in PRISONER interest drew me, like an iron filling to a 20,000 volt electromagnet, to my tapes of the series, recorded when Channel 4 last repeated it and carefully stored in an old box for easy retrieval. Once you watch one, of course, you have got to watch the lot, and I'm now about halfway through the 17. An important fact, that. If we are ever invaded by hostile aliens, it could be the way to tell the invaders apart from indigenous human life. Take your suspect to a pub quiz, at which the question "How many episodes were there of THE PRISONER?" will surely be asked, and if he doesn't know the answer, stick the spike in the back of his neck and watch the green blood ooze out.

As to the shows themselves – well, for 28-year-olds, they're looking pretty trim. The imagery, the ideas, McGoohan's uncompromising crossness – all have survived the intervening decades intact. Watching them again, I was amazed by just how cross McGoohan always was, although if you'd been kidnapped by several second-string British actors of the 1960s and dumped Lord knows where, I don't suppose you'd be too chuffed about it either. But it's his intensity that gives the series its real power. Has there ever been a

leading man so focused? These days we are used to heroes being everyman figures, normal blokes who just happen to find themselves in unlikely situations. But McGoohan was a far stranger individual, something I suspect that no-one had really noticed until he was given the reins of The Prisoner. Then all hell broke loose.

Watching them again, you regret most of all the lack of a proper order. I know that a proper order has since been worked out by experts in white coats working around the clock, for it is obvious that *Dance Of The Dead* was earlier than eighth, and that the second episode with Colin Gordon as Number 2 really should have been shown after the first. In 1967, of course, action adventure series didn't have proper orders. As long as there was at least one fist fight before the second commercial break and the hero got the girl, everyone was happy.

Which reminds me: the fist fights.

If David Duchovny were contractually required to beat up an extra every week in THE X-FILES, we'd probably lobby Washington. Poor old McGoohan was hardly one of nature's pugilists – even Captain Kirk's fights looked more convincing – and yet the weekly punch-up was all but mandatory. But at least he never romanced any of the many lovelies who sashayed their way through the programme. At the time this was unique, and rather admirable. McGoohan, we knew, was just too cross to allow legover to supersede his escaping activities. This man was the ultimate loner, in character and out of character. When he was playing the Prisoner, you knew he wasn't doing an awful lot of acting.

Nowadays series enjoy a little ballast. They can refer back to what has gone before; they are permitted a little chronology. You can't help wondering how THE PRISONER would have turned out if it had enjoyed such freedoms. But no-one had made a series like this before, and no-one had the vision to see where it might lead. Even McGoohan didn't know how to end it. The incoherence of *Fall Out* was true to the spirit of the times, but in dramatic terms it was a shameful cop-out. Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones, now hear the word of the Lord. Complete bilge, if you think about it, and it's to McGoohan's immense credit that he got away with it so long.

And yet it's magnificent failure that creates legends, and there are few telefantasy legends so enduring as that of THE PRISONER. That's where the film will get it wrong: it'll be too good, too clean, it'll make too much sense. Orange alert... ■



NEXT ISSUE: DREAMWATCH FLIES TO LA FOR A FIRSTHAND REPORT ON THE COMPLETION OF THE NEW TWO-HOUR DOCTOR WHO TELEMVIE! PLUS, we talk to two eminent gentlemen who have been at the forefront of sciencefantasy since the Fifties and Sixties – Nigel Kneale and Brian Clemens... and bang up to date with the latest new season guides for Lois & CLARK and THE X-FILES... BABYLON 5's Peter (Londo) Jurasik interviewed... Features on SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND, VR5... & MUCH MORE! DREAMWATCH 20 (APRIL 1996), PUBLISHED 28 MARCH, £2.20

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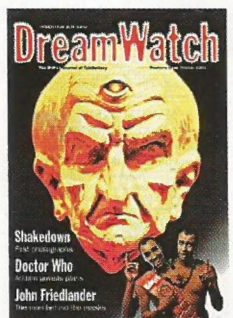
DWB ('DreamWatch Bulletin') was the forerunner to DREAMWATCH, and run from 1983 to '94. DWB was noted for its specialist coverage of telefantasy and won many SF publishing awards. The selection below - comprising DWBs published in its final year worth a cover price value of £31.74 - is yours *absolutely free* when you take out a one-year subscription to DWB's successor, DREAMWATCH. Largely bias towards DOCTOR WHO, you'll find a host of other series scrutinised, from STAR TREK in all its guises to season one of THE X-FILES... Just send a cheque or postal order for £27, plus £5 to cover P+P of your free issues, payable to *DreamWatch Publishing Ltd*, and send your order to **DREAMWATCH BACK ISSUES OFFER, PO BOX 1015, BRIGHTON BN2 2YU**. You'll receive the next 12 issues direct to your door days ahead of publication, and you'll be protected against any increase in the cover price over the next year! (This offer is open to UK residents only)



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Shakedown
Doctor Who
John Friedlander



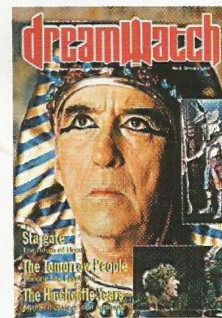
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Doctor Who



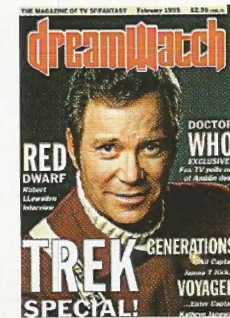
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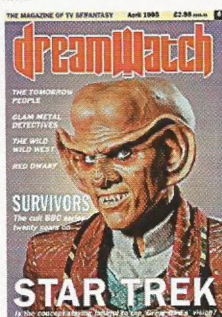
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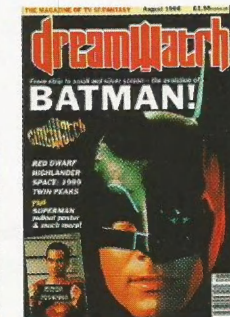
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Babylon 5



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The New Limits
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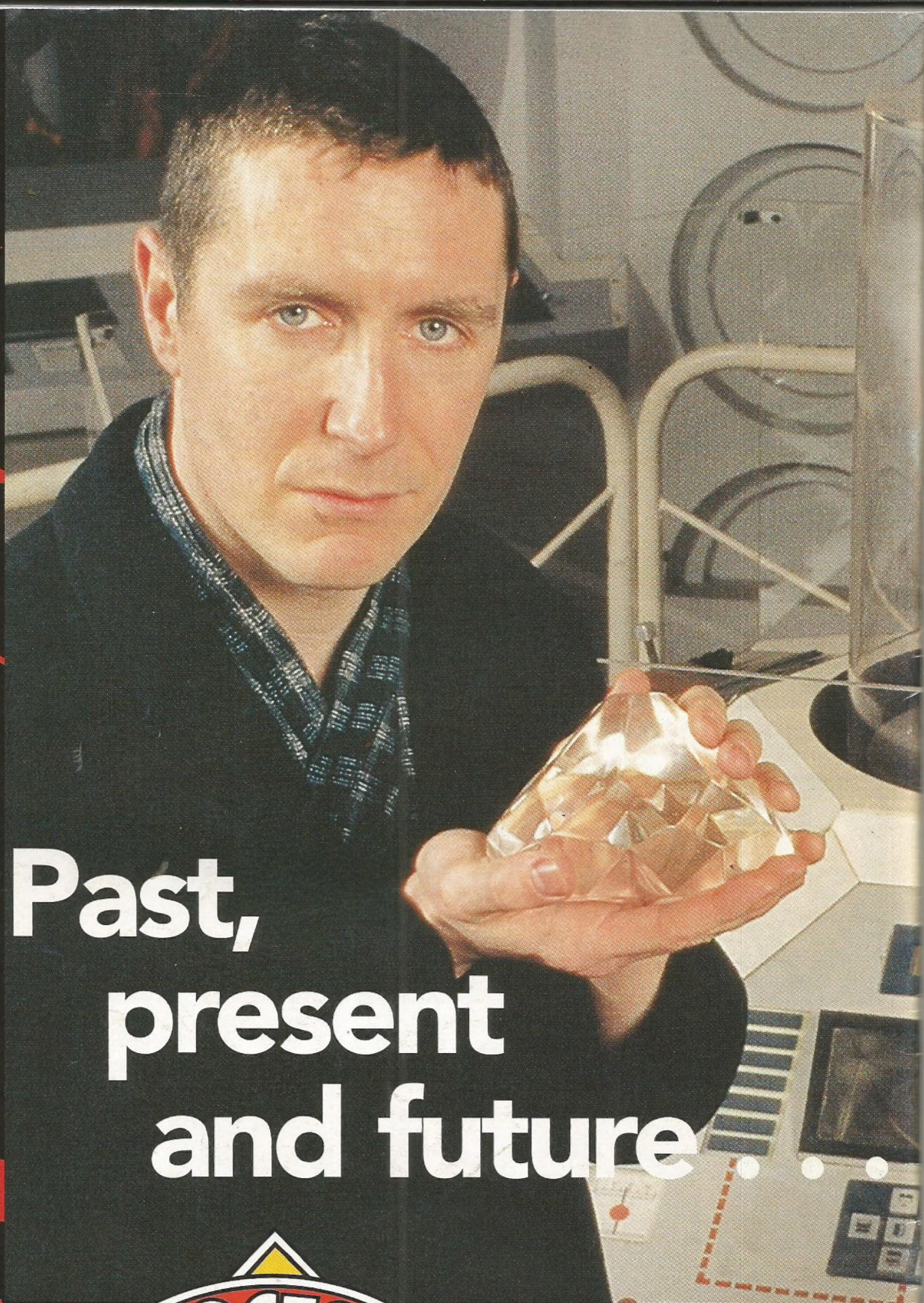
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